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OUR AMERICAN TROPICS

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OUR AMERICAN TROPICS

By
John E. Jennings, Jr.



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INTRODUCTION

IT IS one of the sorrowful facts of life, which all who travel must come in time to learn, that rarely is any place exactly as we picture it first in our mind's eye. To draw upon personal experience, one of the great disappointments of my life was the discovery, after many weary miles of voyaging to look upon it, that the Sahara Desert was not composed entirely of mile-high sand dunes, with tiny, palmy oases huddled in the hollows, and long trains of laden camels outlined against the sky.

On the surface this might appear a gloomy beginning for a book whose main theme is travel. And yet there is a brighter side to the picture. It has also been my experience that, if we can but swallow the first bitter pill of disillusionment and compose ourselves for a second look, we will find that there are beauties and compensations far beyond the reach of our original dreams. Thus, when once I had accepted the new conception of the desert and accustomed myself to the actuality, I found in it a certain wild, unforgettable grandeur, a kind of rugged majesty, beside which all my original imaginings were like a tawdry setting upon a cheap vaudeville stage.

This Pollyanna-ish parable is not without its set purpose. The traveler to the tropics, and especially to our American tropics, will find much that is disappointing. To most of us, I daresay, and especially to those who have never seen them, the word "tropics" conjures up a picture of a white, curving beach, washed by waters of crystal clearness and an indescribable shade of blue; fringed with tall palms whose fronds rustle gently in the mild breeze; bathed, by day, in the sizzling rays of a white hot sun, and by night washed by the soft, mellow light of a great silver moon. Offshore the creamy surf may burst upon a coral reef, but tiny wavelets lap softly at our feet. The days are glorious and warm. The nights are pleasantly languor-

ous. Coconuts and breadfruit, mangoes, papayas, Jamaica apples, soursops and sapadillos grow in profusion but for the picking. Fresh vegetables, succulent shellfish, and all manner of good things to eat appear magically upon the table at mealtimes. And there is little for man to do but sit back and enjoy it all.

This, as I say, is the popular picture of the tropics. Unfortunately it is not true. All these things are to be found. One can always find them singly. Sometimes one finds two or three of them together. But the combination of them all is rare indeed. And happy is the traveler who discovers them together. Let him abide where he is and seek no further!

Moreover, there are other aspects of the picture which catch the average traveler totally unaware. There appears to have been a conspiracy to mislead the unsuspecting tourist with tales of the cheapness of living. In this respect certain writers, apparently for the sake of creating a sensation, have deliberately made false statements. When he stops to think that nearly every little luxury that we of the North have come to look upon as essential to the comfort of living must be imported at considerable cost, the ridiculousness of these statements must be apparent even to the most hopeful. Living in the tropics is no cheaper than it is anywhere. If you exercise the same care you do at home to live in comfort, it will probably cost you just about as much to live in the tropics as it does there. Of course, if one is willing to live in the most abject poverty, with none of the safeguards and conveniences which one would demand, even in similar circumstances at home, one may do so for very little money. But why come to the tropics for that?

Similarly it is rarely that the traveler learns of the pests and dangers of the tropics before he arrives. Few writers mention sharks and barracuda, at least in connection with swimming. Many, indeed most, beaches, be it said here, are perfectly safe. But there are others where it is positively dangerous to go in swimming. By the same token sand flies are seldom heard of outside the tropics themselves. But if the breeze be from the wrong quarter, or, worse still, if there

be no breeze at all, I defy the most hardened scoffer at insect pests to withstand their onslaught.

These are but a few of the disappointments and disillusionments that the prospective traveler may expect to encounter in the tropics. There are others, which will be mentioned in their proper place. But, lest I seem unduly pessimistic and frighten some away, let me hasten to add that there are compensating factors. The voyager who comes forewarned may experience none of the discomforts alluded to. Let him come in the proper season and he will find the sun warm and the air clear. He will find more varieties of exotic tropical fruits than one layman can remember the names of. He will find the beaches superb and the water deliciously refreshing. He will find insect pests almost nonexistent. And he will find color and beauty beyond his wildest dreams.

As a travel book it is the duty of this volume to set forth what is of beauty and of interest to the traveler in our American tropics. Others have touched the subject before. No doubt others will do it again. But each fresh viewpoint will shed a new light upon the subject. Too often such books as these are but paeans of unstinted praise, sensationally phrased, without regard to truth, only that they might be popular. Here and now, let me give my most solemn pledge that this will be an honest book!

A word or two concerning title and subject matter will not, at this point, come amiss. Two points in this connection are worthy of clarification. To begin with, it has been pointed out that the regions covered are but a part of our American tropics. Hawaii, the Canal Zone, the Philippines might justifiably feel slighted to be left out such a book.

Be it hastily admitted that this is so. I have not here attempted to cover all that my title would seem to indicate. But this omission has been made purposely and for good reason. The Philippines are far away and costly to reach, both in point of time and money. One cannot go to Manila and return, unless one flies, in under a month. Hawaii, too, lies half again as far from the mainland of North Amer-

ica as the farthest subject to be touched on in this book, while the Canal Zone is more properly a place to be seen in transit, a stopover between the east and west coasts.

Those regions herein to be treated of, however, are somewhat differently situated. South Florida is readily accessible from any part of the United States or Canada by air, rail, bus or boat; means of transport offering a wide variety fares and speed. Accommodations are plentiful and of all grades, and one's stay need be limited only by one's pocketbook and the time at one's disposal, be it anything from a few days only to several months. Similarly Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands are not so remotely situated as to be difficult of access, though, of course, there one must go either by air or by boat. One may, of course, travel with as much luxury as one can afford. At the same time they are not beyond the reach of the average man. With two weeks time and a minimum of two hundred dollars one may go from New York and return, see all the islands and Puerto Rico, and have at least five days to spend ashore.

The second point which seems to call for explanation, follows the opposite point of view. "Why not," say many of my friends, "cover all the islands of the West Indies? Surely they are as much 'American' even though they are not our possessions. They belong to the Americas geographically."

It is true enough that the other islands of the West Indies are geographically American. It is equally logical to lump them together. But has not this been done—frequently and quite adequately? Indeed, so adequately has it been done that our own possessions suffer from it. Few, if any, of such books give Puerto Rico and the Virgins more than a chapter or two before passing on to the better-known and more widely-publicized British, French and Dutch islands: and a chapter or two cannot do full justice to all that is of beauty and interest there. In similar fashion the better-known cities of Florida's east and west coasts draw the cream of the winter tourists that visit that state annually. Of the vast horde that comes to Miami each year only a comparative few pass beyond to the Keys and Key West. Indeed, many are scarcely aware of their existence.

And yet, to my mind at least, this is by far the most interesting part of Florida.

Apart from fiction, no book dealing with Key West and the Keys has been written in nearly a half a century. The Virgin Islands have had but two books in a score of years. Puerto Rico has had but two in more than a decade. The inevitable result has been that our traveling public, scarcely aware of the beauty and charm and interest of our own possessions, has gone elsewhere: to Havana, to Nassau, to Jamaica, even to Trinidad and Barbados.

Of late, however, within the past two or three years, due to a certain extent to Federal activities, there has been an awakening of public interest in these territories. The imminent completion of the Overseas Highway, a Federal project, has turned attention to Key West. Somewhat similar enterprises have brought our island possessions in the Caribbean to the fore. A number of magazine articles have helped to fix them in the public eye, despite the fact that their information has not always been the most accurate. The result of all this has been a demand for informative material far exceeding the supply.

It is the object of this book in some measure to meet that demand. Whether or not it succeeds in its object will be for the reader to decide. I have tried to give a true and accurate picture of South Florida, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands as I found them. I have tried to anticipate and answer such questions as a prospective traveler might ask.

It would be impossible, for lack of space, to thank here everyone who has assisted in the making of this book. Their names are far too numerous to mention. Indeed, there are many who have helped here and there with a hint as to some point of interest or a word of information whose names I do not even know. These are casual acquaintances: business men, taxi drivers, clerks, librarians' assistants, all manner of men and women who have been interested in what I have been doing. I cannot thank these individually, one and all, but I can and hereby do tender my gratitude to them in the mass.

Acknowledgement, however, should be made to certain indi-

viduals who went to considerable trouble and effort to assist me. Most notable among these is Mr. Canby Chambers, of Key West and Martha's Vineyard, who might be said to be responsible for everything, in that it was he who brought author and publisher together. Others are Mr. Nelson A. Loomis, Director of the United States Tourist Bureau, of the Department of the Interior, who furnished many valuable leads and introductions; the Honorable Lawrence Cramer, Governor of the Virgin Islands of the United States; the Honorable Blanton Winship, Governor of Puerto Rico; Mr. Robert Herrick, Government Secretary of the Virgin Islands, St. Thomas; Mr. Harry Taylor, Administrator of Saint Croix, Virgin Islands; Mr. Hamilton Cochran, author of *These Are the Virgin Islands*, who also furnished leads and introductions; Mr. F. Townsend Morgan, formerly of the Federal Art Project in Saint Thomas; Mr. Conrad Van Hyning, formerly Commissioner of Social Welfare for the State of Florida, for leads and introductions, as well as for detailed information on the Florida Hurricane of 1935. To Mr. R. G. Grassfield, General Manager of the Florida State Chamber of Commerce; to Mr. Ernest F. Coe, Jr., Chairman of the Everglades National Park Association; to Mr. John L. Morris of the Miami Chamber of Commerce; to Mr. Charles Thompson and Mr. James Sullivan, both of Key West; to Mr. Robert Baker, for his assistance in securing pictures and information on the New Overseas Highway; to Captain Ed Sheeran, who gave an eyewitness account of the hurricane of '35; to Captain Bra Sanders and Captain Jakie Key, who donated practical assistance and information on Key West's magnificent fishing, to Thurston Child of St. Thomas; to the Reverend John Levo of Fredericksted; to Dr. Atherton Lee, Director of the Agricultural Experiment Station, at Mayaguez, P. R.; to these, and to many others, the author's grateful thanks are due.

JOHN E. JENNINGS, JR.

*The Farm,
Plymouth, New Hampshire,
August, 1938.*

PART I
SOUTH FLORIDA

- I. Winter Playground; Approach to the Tropics*
- II. A Tale of Two Cities*
- III. Last Frontier*
- IV. Down to the Sea in Cars*
- V. U. S. Farthest South*

WINTER PLAYGROUND APPROACH TO THE TROPICS

Chapter I

IT is four full centuries now, and a quarter of another, since Ponce de León, then the Spanish governor of Puerto Rico, landed at the present site of Saint Augustine; the first white man to set foot upon the peninsula of Florida. To be strictly exact, it was on Easter Day, in the year 1513. And, if there be any truth in the old tale, so impressed was he by the profusion of flowers which he found growing on every hand that, in claiming the land which he had discovered for His Most Catholic Majesty, Ferdinand V, he named it "Pascua Florida"—or "Flowery Easter"—with a fine disregard for the sense of locality so necessary in a place name.

So, at least, runs the story. It must be admitted, however, that even as a schoolboy I, for one, was inclined to look upon it with suspicion; although I took pains to write it carefully into all examinations in early American history, for it was evident that the teacher took it seriously.

More than likely, I always thought, he really meant to give it some prosaic name like "New León," after his home province. Still he must have dropped some reference to the flowers, for "Florida" stuck. And "Florida" it remains to this day, four hundred and twenty-five years since.

But this is not all the legend. Ponce de León, still a comparatively young man, by our present day standards—he was only fifty-three—, had evidently an overwhelming fear of growing old. Gold to him, as to any Spaniard of his time, was a thing to be much sought

after. But he differed from his contemporaries in that he valued one thing far above gold. That was youth. Perhaps he had a young wife.

Anyway, it was this desire to remain always young that caused him to lend an ear to the Indian legend of a fountain of eternal youth that lay somewhere to the westward. So marvelous were the properties of this spring, according to the story, that he who bathed in its waters and drank of them regularly would retain his youthful spirits forever. De León gave heed to the tale and thought it over carefully. Perhaps a second consideration occurred to him. Ferdinand, the old king, was no longer so young as he had been. He was sixty-one. And great must be the reward for anyone who should produce so rare a gift!

Now, it seems impossible that such a man as Ponce de León should be taken in by such a fantasy. In order to have gained his post as governor of Puerto Rico he must have been something of a man of the world. Yet all the histories assure us that such was the case; and in extenuation of the idea it must be remembered that he lived at an age when superstition ran rife; when men had confidence in the potions and incantations of magicians, and held all manner of weird beliefs. At that very moment in Spain, and in the new world as well, men were being ground upon the rack and burned at the stake, not for the mere torture of their bodies—never that!—but rather that the demons which possessed them might be driven out.

At any rate, de León sailed and discovered Florida. In Saint Augustine they will point out to you a well of dark colored water with a peculiar bitter taste, which they will tell you he also discovered. Whether he did or not is hard to say. But if he did, and if he drank much of it, he must have sailed away in some discomfort, for the water has particular and somewhat embarrassing qualities. Certainly it is not rejuvenating.

It is recorded that de León sailed away from Anastasia Inlet, Saint Augustine's outlet to the sea, a disappointed, bitterly disillusioned man, and that he returned some years later to the neighborhood of Tampa Bay to resume his search. There he was struck down by

a poisoned arrow, shot from the cover of the dense thickets by a hostile Indian. And shortly afterwards, in Cuba, he died as a result of the wound.

Poor Ponce de León! So literal in his superstitions! He could not know how nearly he had attained his object. Four centuries and a little after his death the climate of the land he had discovered was to prove a veritable "fountain of youth," bringing rest and recreation, escape from the rigors of northern winters, and, thereby, a measure of rejuvenation to millions each year.

From the day of its discovery by de León Florida's history has been anything but dull. Though a number of expeditions coasted along her shores, there was no attempt at settlement for a half a century. De Soto, de Narvaez, de Luna, all landed and explored hopefully in the neighborhood of Tampa Bay and Pensacola. But it remained for a group of French Huguenots under Jean Ribault to establish the first colony in 1562. This was at the mouth of what they called the Rivière du Mai, now the Saint John's, near the site of the present Mayport.

Unfortunately for them, the colonists were not only Frenchmen, but, in the eyes of the Spaniards, at least, they were heretics as well. All that portion of North America had unquestionably been claimed for Spain. It was unthinkable that such nonconforming dogs should be permitted to remain within the realm of His Most Catholic Majesty! As soon as he heard of it, Phillip II despatched Don Pedro Menendez de Aviles to drive them out. It was an assignment after Menendez' own heart, for he was cruel, fanatical—a typical product of his time.

The French had built themselves a small fort at the mouth of the River May, which they had named Fort Caroline. It might have been a different story that history has to tell had the French elected to remain where they were and defend their position, for then nature would have been their ally. The Spaniards would not alone have had to face the French. They would as well have had to contend with a treacherous, swampy terrain, vast clouds of voracious mosquitoes,

an inadequate water supply, the rigors of the storm, and the ever present possibility of attack from the rear by hostile Indians.

Ribault, however, was a sailor. His natural element was the sea, and it was on the sea that he preferred to do battle. Accordingly, with all the available men and arms at his command he sailed forth to meet the enemy.

The sequel was the sheerest tragedy. Nature wreaked a fearful vengeance on the tiny expedition. In a sudden hurricane all their ships were wrecked upon the grim stretch of beach between Matanzas Inlet, some twenty miles to southward of Saint Augustine, and the present Daytona. In the meantime Menendez had sailed directly in upon the little settlement at the mouth of the River May and, finding it but meagerly defended, put all he found there to fire and the sword. Then, learning that Ribault and his men had gone south to meet him, he set sail at once and put in at Anastasia Inlet, presumably as a refuge from the storm. There he was informed, by scouts sent down in small boats, that Ribault and his surviving force were encamped among the dunes to southward of Matanzas Inlet. He moved at once to the attack.

The two forces faced each other across the rips of Matanzas; the French occupying the site of the present little colony of Summer Haven, while the Spaniards lay among the dunes of the north side, not far from where the filling station and cottages now stand.

Ribault and his men were exhausted from their battle with the storm and their desperate trek along the sands. Their arms were only what they had been able to salvage from the wreckage of their fleet. Such powder as they had was damp. Menendez, on the other hand was well armed and equipped, and his force was far superior to that of the French. The inevitable result must have been obvious to all. Nevertheless, Ribault and his followers made such preparations as they could to sell their lives dearly.

It is a commentary on Menendez' character, more eloquent than any words could be, that he chose to do by treachery what might as easily have been accomplished in a fair fight. Under cover of a flag

of truce he sent Ribault an offer of quarter for all who would surrender.

The French had no choice but to accept his terms. In good faith they laid down their arms and, in small groups, were ferried across the inlet in Menendez' boats. As each boatload arrived they were hurried off among the dunes, out of sight of their companions on the far shore, and there they were ruthlessly butchered, one by one in cold blood, "not," as Menendez later said in extenuation of his crime, "as Frenchmen, but as heretics."

Some time later Menendez sailed away to Spain to report his successful completion of his mission. But before he did so he established a fort and colony upon the mainland opposite Anastasia Inlet, close by the spot where Ponce de León had first set foot ashore. Thus, on a foundation of treachery and bloody murder was founded Saint Augustine, the first permanent settlement upon the North American Continent. If rumor is to be believed, the shifting sands of Anastasia Island, close about Matanzas Inlet, to this day still give up from time to time occasional skulls and human bones; relics, so they say, of Jean Ribault's ill-fated force.

The tradition of strife in which the colony thus had its inception was difficult to quench. For nearly three hundred years men fought and wrangled over Florida. The forces of warring governments battled for it. Visionary adventurers, ill-advised and poorly equipped, attempted to seize it. And three times, at least, it was invaded, in open violation of treaties of peace, by the armed forces of the United States. Eight flags—those of Spain, France, England, the United States, the Confederacy, Venezuela, the Argentine, and Mexico, more than have ever flown over any other portion of our country—have waved above her soil. Though, be it said here, in justice to those governments, the last-named three were hoisted by adventurers acting on their own initiative, without the sanction or knowledge of the nations involved. Twice the state has been declared an independent republic: once at Fernandina, in the east, and again at Pensacola, in the west.

All this bickering and battling might easily have been avoided,

however. Once they had it, no one seemed to know what to do with the place. The northern portion of the state developed early and along moderately conventional lines. But the peninsula stuck down from our southern coast line like a sore thumb, a sandy, apparently worthless waste, accursed of mariners, who had to make a thousand mile detour around it in their voyages between the east coast and New Orleans and other Gulf ports. The cattle which the old Spaniards had brought with them were running wild and increasing in the interior, as were the oranges which they had planted. But these were unsuspected blessings of which no one had any idea, and had any person been so rash as to prophesy the state's agricultural future as it has actually developed, he would have been looked upon as hopelessly insane. As for its becoming the world's most popular winter resort, such an idea was undreamed of, even in the mind of the most complete idiot. It remained for one man to introduce Florida to her ultimate destiny.

Juan Ponce de León might well be termed the patron saint of winter tourists, for he was the great grand-daddy of them all. Unfortunately for him, however, he was born too soon. The world was not yet ready to make use of what he had discovered. Indeed, the world was not even ready to recognize it. It was nearly four centuries before another man, born to an older and, we hope, somewhat wiser world, rediscovered what de León had found and realized wherein lay its true worth.

Henry M. Flagler was no dreamer. He was a shrewd, hard-headed, practical businessman, yet he came first to Florida on much the same sort of quest as that which had brought de León. He had no illusions as to the possibility of finding a miraculous, youth-restoring fountain. But he did come, on the advice of his physician, seeking health and a measure of rejuvenation in rest and the bracing Florida sunshine. At that time Saint Augustine was as far south as the rails went, and so it was that Florida's second discoverer made his discovery at almost the identical spot as the first.

I have said that Flagler was shrewd. He spent some time in Saint Augustine, and was impressed by the mildness of its winter climate,

And having been impressed he was quick to realize that there were thousands who would flock to it, if only it were made a little more accessible.

Somewhere in the back of his mind there may have lurked another consideration, for, as I have indicated, he was nothing if not practical. Already the citrus fruit industry in the northern portion of the state was achieving importance. It was reasonable to believe that it would become more so. The opening of the West by the railroads was even then setting an example. Of all the East, Florida alone lay untapped by rails. The extension of lines southward into the peninsula was a logical step, and so smart a businessman as Flagler, with money to invest in it, would not be caught napping.

This, as I say, may have been in the back of his mind. But his heart was in the development of the state as a resort. He bought and rebuilt the railroad from Jacksonville. He bought land in Saint Augustine and built the great rambling Ponce de León Hotel.

For its day it was a magnificent structure, and its instant success proved how right Flagler had been. From that day onward his operations in Florida never ceased. On southward he pushed his rails; to Daytona, to Palm Beach, to Miami, even across the Keys to Key West. It is interesting to speculate on what he might have done to develop the last named city, but, alas, he died before he could turn his hand to that, and there was none who could or would succeed him as a practical visionary.

Today the old Ponce de León at Saint Augustine stands outmoded and antique in all its musty glory, a splendid monument to his memory. Today the world has gone on to other hotels. But the resorts to which he turned his hand—Daytona, Palm Beach, Miami, yes and even old Saint Augustine itself,—have succeeded far beyond his fondest dreams.

Flagler had his rivals and imitators. Henry B. Plant did for Tampa and the West Coast what he accomplished for the East. Hamilton Disston bought and began the development of an enormous tract on the West Coast below Tampa. Even today Barron Collier is following in their footsteps with his hotels and his development of

Everglades. Others followed in a smaller and more localized scale. Addison Mizner and Paris Singer did much for Palm Beach. Miami Beach has John Collins and Carl Fisher to remember. Saint Petersburg had Peter Demens, not to mention Major Lew Brown. There were and are others—too many of them to mention. It is in large part due to their efforts that Florida is today the world's greatest winter resort.

There will be raised eyebrows among many of my readers at the inclusion of Florida in a book on "Tropical" America, yet, if it does not fall within the strict technical sense of the term, the southern tip of the peninsula, at least, falls well within the popular conception. Nowhere else in continental United States is there to be found such a profusion of tropical growth. Mangoes, papayas, sapadillos, guavas, avocados, bananas, pineapples, and pomegranates, not to mention a dozen other varieties of exotic tropical fruits, grow and flourish there. The citrus industry is too well known to bear emphasis. Sugar cane, surely one of the most tropical of crops, is cultivated in commercial quantities. More than three hundred varieties of palms (including the outstretched!) are to be found. Coconuts are commonplace.

But it is not vegetation alone that makes the tropics. Indeed, there are many spots between the tropics of Cancer and Capricorn whose growth is anything but tropical. At least in the popular idea, climate is fully as important. There may be mountains in equatorial Africa, well within the true tropics, whose summits are capped with snow the year round, but no one thinks of them as tropical. Rather the picture which comes most naturally to mind, in that connection, is one of hot, languorous days, of a blistering sun overhead, and of a sky, so blue that our poor northern skies grow pale by comparison, and so low that it seems almost near enough to touch. We think of waters, only a little less clear than the air we breathe, and bluer than the sky. We think of soft, warm nights, when a great white moon turns the fronds of the palms to silver and casts long black shadows across the sandy beach, of nights when stars as bright and sparkling as diamonds ride embedded in a sky of purple velvet.

Be it said here, in haste, lest I be accused of over-enthusiasm and

exaggeration, that Florida has its wintry days, when the mercury dips into the forties and the skies are overcast; when a sharp wind blows from seaward, and the angry rollers, gray-green and opaque, beat against the shore. Miami, let its citizens deny it if they can, has its chilly nights when blankets are necessary and when, on very rare occasions, there is even a touch of frost. But on the whole such days are "unusual," and south Florida's climate is as tropical as one could wish.

Unfortunately there is no universal gauge whereby we may tell where non-tropical lands leave off and the tropics, in this popular sense, begin. Each one of us has his own personal indicator, as infallible to him as a barometer. It may be the sight of palms and the sea in juxtaposition for some, and to these the palmetto-lined coasts of South Carolina and Georgia must seem tropical indeed. Others may be thrilled by the sight of orange groves and hibiscus. To them Saint Augustine will herald their arrival. But to each one of us, heading southward for the first time, there comes a moment when something we have seen or felt or smelled or heard or tasted impels us to say "now I am in the tropics."

If you approach Florida by motor, as you may very likely do, and if you follow the East Coast Highway, U. S. 1, as the chances are two to one you will, you will pass through the little city of Fort Pierce, which, of late years, has achieved no little prominence as a port of shipment for citrus fruits and fertilizers. Fort Pierce, being able to stand upon its own industrial feet, is one of the few Florida towns that does not practically fall over backwards in its effort to attract and mesmerize tourists. This is not to say that tourists are frowned upon if they come. Never that! For the people of Fort Pierce are as hospitable as any in the world. But they have more serious business than the entertainment of casual visitors. Consequently, of the thousands who pass this way each year, but few stop.

I speak of Fort Pierce purposely, neither to recommend nor disparage, but rather because it is here that one leaves behind the rolling highlands that have bordered the Indian River for the last eighty miles or more, and descends to the hot flats of Saint Lucie County.

Southward from Fort Pierce the country through which one passes changes character abruptly. The lush citrus groves, which have lined the road on either hand from New Smyrna down, stop as suddenly as though they had been cut off with an axe. Below the town there is but a single pineapple plantation to catch the eye. After that the countryside gives way to gray, sandy soil, sparsely covered with sear, brown grass and palmetto scrub and a thin scattering of tall, spindling pines.

It is a dreary ride and a tiring one. Only the water hyacinths, blooming in the ditch beside the road, lend a touch of color. The road stretches straight away in the distance, lined with gaudy billboards—scarcely a thrilling or an inspiring bit of highway. Yet, whenever I approach it, the weariness of the long drive south drops from me and I am conscious of a thrill of pleasure and anticipation, for I know a long-awaited moment is close at hand.

A score of miles, from Fort Pierce to Stuart, the weary road runs. At Stuart the bright, sparkling waters of Saint Lucie Inlet, and the little town, break the monotony for one brief instant. Then, beyond, the somber countryside begins again and rolls on and on until it seems almost endless.

Perhaps it is this very seeming interminability that makes its abrupt ending all the more welcome. At one moment we are whirling through the sparse pine growth. In the next we swoop suddenly around a slight bend and down a little hill. There is a brief scattering of green growth to right and to left, and then, all at once, we are streaming down the hill towards the Loxahatchee River and the bridge at Jupiter Inlet.

There are a few unattractive cabins and a gas station or two on either hand, but the eye scarcely notices these for it passes beyond to the left where the waters of the Inlet gleam and sparkle brightly in the sun, and the pink tower of Jupiter Light rises upon the point, sharply silhouetted against the misty blue of the sea beyond.

It is but a brief glimpse, albeit a promising one. That lighthouse outlined sharp against the sea makes a picture that sticks in one's memory after more important vistas have faded away. In another

moment we are over the bridge and spinning across the flat beyond. The road curves left through scrubby growth. A secondary road leads off to a fishing camp on the point. "Bait—Boats for Hire," says a sign. Beyond, the road rises steeply, swinging first right, then left, climbing a sandy bluff; and, all at once, we find ourselves come out upon the crest of a ridge of dunes, overlooking the sea.

Pause here a moment. It has taken us scarcely two minutes from the time we left the dreary stretch of spindling pines and coarse grass to reach this point, yet we have come into a totally different land. Ahead the road stretches across the tops of the dunes. Beside it there is a narrow strip of sand and grass—just sufficient to keep it from tumbling off—and then a sheer sand bluff, cut in the face of the dunes themselves by the action of the pounding waves, dropping away, straight down, a distance of twenty feet or more to the wide beach below. All around the horizon, to south and east and north, the ocean stretches—gleaming in the sunlight, and of a shade of blue unknown in more northerly latitudes. Behind, in the hollow we have just left, an occasional palm waves lightly in the breeze; and over the palms the pink lighthouse looms.

Surely there is a new feeling to this scene, a new beauty such as we have not experienced before. It may be the bright sea stretching away to the misty horizon. Perhaps it is the long parade of sand dunes with their sheer faces falling away to the ocean below. It might be the gently waving palms behind us. But I think it is none of these. To me, at least, it is the water itself, sweeping up in great rollers to thunder down upon the shell-pink beach; water that, even in close to shore, is blue as gentians in the spring, and yet so clear that one can look through the face of an approaching wave, beneath the crest of foam, and see the next one marching in behind.

When I have seen that sight, after a thousand miles and more of weary driving, I can say to myself, "I am here at last. I have reached the land of the sun!" What matter then a few more miles of scrubby pine and dreary country? For me the tropics have begun.

A TALE OF TWO CITIES

Chapter II

IT WOULD be difficult to imagine two communities more similar, and yet more widely different, in many ways, than Palm Beach and Miami. It is a fact, so well established as to be almost axiomatic, that no Florida city will recognize another's claim to any distinction whatever. But between these two—or rather, to speak more strictly, four, for Palm Beach and West Palm Beach are separate municipalities, as are Miami and Miami Beach—there exists a rivalry so bitter as to be almost feudal in its proportions. From one palm-studded sand spit the city of Palm Beach looks aloofly, haughtily, with even an air of rather patronizing pity, across the intervening eighty miles at Miami Beach upon her palm-studded sand spit. Palm Beach is “exclusive”—and is proud of it. Palm Beach is a snob—and admits it. If you arrive on her streets with a trailer hitched to the back of your car, you will be allowed an hour in which to look around—and be properly impressed—but no more. At the end of an hour a policeman will ask you, politely but firmly, to move on. Miami Beach, on the other hand, welcomes trailers—provided you do not park them on the street. In Palm Beach they will tell you that all Miamians are money-grubbers. In Palm Beach they care nothing for money—in denominations of less than ten dollars. In Miami they point a sneering finger at Palm Beach. “A has been,” they snort, “an ancient dodo! In ten years it'll be as dead as Saint Augustine. It's nearly that already. Who wants to spend all his time riding about in wheel chairs? Everybody's coming to Miami these days.” Palm Beach looks superciliously at Miami through a lorgnette and sniffs. Miami

only laughs a loud raucous laugh, and gives Palm Beach "the bird."

And yet, despite all these differences, there are some striking similarities between the two. At risk of complete ostracism in both it might be said of them that "the colonel's lady and Judy O'Grady are sisters under the skin." The differences between them are superficial rather than basic. Both are resort communities—and Florida resort communities: which can mean but little until you have become familiar with them. Then you will learn that the typical Florida winter resort is possessed of a certain swaggering blatancy and braggadocio that is to be found nowhere else in the world, and which must be seen to be believed. They are not a hundred miles apart. The beach at one is but a continuation of that at the other. Yet each one boasts of its sun and its climate, of its magnificent beach, of its proximity to the Gulf Stream, as if these things were to be found at no other spot on earth—and certainly not in the other. If you will listen to a Miamian you will be led to believe that it is a different, a colder, a less beneficial sun that shines on Palm Beach; while if you give heed to a resident of Palm Beach you will gather that in some mysterious manner the air of his city is rendered more salubrious by the effluvia of wealth which hang on every breeze.

This is not to say that there are no differences between the two communities. There are. Yet even in their differences they are similar. There is the difference of temperament. Miami is gay and hectic. Palm Beach is inclined to be more sober, or rather more quiet in her pleasures. And yet Palm Beach makes whoopee in its own way. There is no gambling establishment in the country more widely known than Bradley's.

There are differences, also, of plan and architecture, as there must always be between separate communities. Yet, in spite of these they appear amazingly alike to the casual observer. There are the same broad, palm-lined avenues and boulevards. There are the same stucco villas and immense hotels. There are the same "cute" little houses and modernistic apartments.

There are differences in the people too, though you can't tell it to look at them. If you couldn't smell the money in Palm Beach

you would think the people you see on Worth Avenue were the same as those you find on Lincoln Road in Miami Beach. The people on Palm Beach Avenue look like those on Collins Avenue; only there may be more of them on Miami Beach's main thoroughfare. The same society photographers haunt both.

And, after all, all this is not so strange, for both communities were sired by the same parent. Both are by Flagler out of the railroad.

You don't have to be a millionaire to spend a winter in Palm Beach—not quite. If you can get along with two or three rooms you can rent a little bungalow or an apartment—not on the beach of course, but at the same time not too far from it—for twelve or fifteen hundred dollars for the season. For this you will be privileged to sit upon the city's only public beach, at the foot of Royal Palm Way, or to walk upon the boardwalk and speculate upon which of the passing strangers are of the socially élite. The passing strangers will probably also be speculating as to whether or not you are one of that elect circle, so it makes a fair game.

But when you come to Palm Beach you must enter it, no matter how blue your blood or how fat your wallet, through the back door—by way of West Palm Beach.

West Palm Beach might figuratively be called the tradesmen's entrance to Palm Beach, for it is through West Palm Beach that all the sordid necessities of life—food, water, light, gas, telephone, and kindred services—and all the luxuries must pass.

West Palm Beach stands upon the western shore of Lake Worth, the tidal estuary which separates it from its more aristocratic sister on the ocean front. It began its life in the eighteen-nineties as a rail head and construction camp for Henry M. Flagler's great Royal Poinciana Hotel at the Beach. Flagler was absorbed in plans for the future of the resort he was creating, and it is doubtful if even he foresaw the growth of the village on the mainland. But today the Royal Poinciana is gone, torn down to make way for a more modern structure. His other hotel, The Breakers, burned to the ground in 1925. But West Palm Beach, the shack village thrown up for the construction

emergency, is today a busy, attractive little city with a population of more than 27,000.

The visitor entering West Palm Beach from the north does so upon a broad, palm-lined boulevard, divided into lanes for faster and slower traffic. So accustomed has the average traveler's eye become to the sight of palms of one variety or another that, bowling along at a good clip, he is likely to ride almost the full length of this long avenue before he realizes that these are different. Even then, if he has never seen them before, it will be some seconds before he grasps the fact that they are coconuts—the first he has encountered in any quantity.

Attractive though they are, however, the palms are but a small part of this thoroughfare's charms, for the way leads through a pleasant section of small homes. Comfortable, unpretentious, well-cared-for, they stand in sharp contrast to the more palatial estates on the other side of Lake Worth, an interesting demonstration of how reasonably and with what modern comfort one can live in the shadow of a great resort, if one is willing to forego some of the glitter and social fanfare. Indeed, all West Palm Beach prides itself upon its democratic air and the reasonableness of its accommodations.

The city itself, which springs upon us suddenly at the end of the long boulevard, can only be described as a Miami in miniature, from its parked and landscaped waterfront with its tall white hotels to the bustling heart of its business section with its crowded traffic and its modern, well-stocked shops.

It was in the 1870's that the ship *Providencia*, northbound along the Florida coast with a cargo of coconuts, was wrecked in a hurricane just south of what is now known as Lake Worth Inlet. The ship was a total loss, being pounded to pieces by the heavy seas and its cargo was scattered for miles along the beach. The incident might be dismissed as unimportant, but for the bearing it had upon the future of the locality, for, but for the wreck of the *Providencia*, Palm Beach might still be but a barren sandy waste, abandoned to seagulls and surf fishermen. The coconuts which formed the *Pro-*

videncia's cargo, once washed ashore, sprouted and took root, and when, a quarter of a century later, Flagler came searching for a site to build his hotels, the whole island was densely forested with palms.

These palms have served a double purpose, for, besides giving Palm Beach its name, there is no doubt but what they strongly influenced Flagler in his choice of a locale. Once chosen, however, and the two enormous hotels built, the new resort did not at once achieve its present day popularity and position as America's most exclusive wintering place. Indeed, its growth was gradual, even slow; and it was not until the days of the World War that it leapt suddenly into prominence. Flagler and a few others, it is true, built palatial homes; but it was only when the war drove that group which was accustomed to spend its winters in the Mediterranean resorts to seek new fields for play that this "capital of the American Riviera" was "discovered."

From that day Palm Beach may date its phenomenal growth. From that day it may date the boom. And it is a strange and rather amazing fact that in the years since it has never lost the character of aristocracy which it then achieved. A few parvenues and some of *hoi-polloi* may have slipped in in the confusion of the slump of the late twenties and early thirties, with its resulting drop in land values, but on the whole Palm Beach has remained snobbish to the core and its society is still a closed corporation.

Three bridges connect Palm Beach with the mainland, and even if one is in a hurry to get on to Miami it is well worth the short time it takes to drive over and see it, if only to satisfy a natural curiosity. To my mind, the best way is to cross Lake Worth by the Flagler Memorial bridge, which is the northernmost of the three. As one swings onto the bridge from Fifth Street one sees, to the southward, along the West Palm Beach waterfront, the trim fleet of charter boats that makes these waters headquarters during the winter season. At Palm Beach, the Gulf Stream lies but three miles off shore, and for from twenty to thirty-five dollars a day, depending upon the boat, you may hire one of the fleet and enjoy the privilege of trying to catch a "sail." Sailfish, amberjack, dolphin, mackerel, kingfish, and a score of others are to be found on the "grounds," ready and

waiting the angler's lure. In fairness to the skippers who make their headquarters here, it might be added that this scale of prices is standard on the coast from Montauk Point on Long Island to Key West and back around the Gulf Coast to Texas. However, if this seems steep—and it certainly is not cheap if no more than one or two are in the party—one may go out for bottom fishing on party boats for as little as two dollars for the day.

As we approach the Palm Beach end of the bridge the large white building looming on the left is the famous—or infamous, depending upon the point of view,—Bradley's Beach Club, where, if you are not a resident—for Floridians must not gamble, it seems—and if you are well and properly sponsored you may play away your shirt, if you wish.

Nearby is the spot where the old Royal Poinciana Hotel stood, Flagler's original venture here. A little farther along the immense bulk of the Breakers Hotel looms, replacing the original structure of the same name, burned in 1925. Northward of this point, along the extension of Palm Beach Avenue known as the County Road one finds the Country Club, as well as a number of the huge estates for which the city is famous. It is worth the twenty minutes or so that it takes to run out to the end of the road, at Lake Worth Inlet, if only to see the care that is lavished upon the grounds surrounding these magnificent homes. As often as not one sees no more than an austere chained gateway or a hedgerow of Australian pines. But these, with an occasional vista between, bear mute witness to the wealth and luxury that lie beyond.

In sharp contrast to all this is the tall skeleton of an immense incompleting building looming upon the island to the northward of Palm Beach, across Lake Worth Inlet. This gloomy reminder of the fallibility of man, staring so bleakly across the intervening waters at its more prosperous neighbors, is all that was ever completed of a great hotel, projected and begun by Paris Singer, one of Palm Beach's sponsors after the war, and scion of Singer Sewing Machines. Singer's scheme was sound enough—an extension of Palm Beach northward. But, unfortunately, the structure was not half complete when the

Florida boom bubble burst and work ceased. Today it is known as "Singer's Folly."

Back again at the Breakers drive south, still on Palm Beach Avenue, through the busy shopping district, to Worth Avenue, and there turn to the right. It is here that one finds the "exclusive" shopping center, for here are the shops from New York and London and Paris. The word "exclusive" is placed in quotes, for it is not mine. There is no case on record of any of these shops excluding anyone able or willing to pay its price.

On Worth Avenue also is located the exclusive Everglades Club—exclusive, here, not placed in quotes, for the club is genuinely exclusive in its membership. The Everglades Club, the first of many exclusive Palm Beach Clubs, also owes its existence to Paris Singer. In 1917 Singer conceived the laudable plan of building here a great hospital for wounded and convalescent soldiers. Promptly he engaged Addison Mizner to design the building and take charge of construction. By the time it was completed, however, the war was over and the need past. Something had to be done with the building. The rest is history.

But so far we have seen nothing, beyond a brief glimpse at the north, of the beach from which the city takes half its name. Turn around on Worth Avenue and drive east to Ocean Boulevard, another street of waving palms, fronting directly upon the beach. At the foot of Worth Avenue is the municipal pier, extending nearly a thousand feet into the ocean, where anglers who like to try their luck from something solid may cast their lines for the modest price of a quarter admission. South from Worth Avenue is another section of magnificent estates, fronting on the ocean, but as difficult to view as those to the north, and each with its private beach; while northward, as far as Royal Palm Way the municipal beach with its attendant public buildings presents a colorful spectacle. The beach itself is truly fine, being of coarse yellow sand sloping gradually to meet the clear blue of the Atlantic rollers. But to my mind, at least, it is somewhat cramped for space, and a little too apt to be crowded for comfort. Looking out at the bright bathing suits that dot the sands,

one cannot help wondering how many of them ever go near the water.

From the north end of the beach Royal Palm Way leads back, directly through the busy center of the town to the Royal Park bridge across Lake Worth to the mainland and the abode of ordinary mortals once again.

After our glimpse at how the other half lives, the string of small resort communities lying to southward of Palm Beach seems almost too insignificant to mention. Nevertheless, each has its own character and personality. Lake Worth lies too close to Palm Beach to be anything but a suburban community. It tries to ape its more aristocratic neighbor with scant success; communities, like individuals, must be to the manner born. Lantana is little more than a crossroads. Hypoluxo and Boynton are real estate men's dreams gone to seed—in more ways than one. Their elaborately planned streets are now little used. Many of them are completely overgrown. Their only *raison d'être* now are their extensive nurseries. Delray Beach boasts an artistic and literary colony in which such names as Nina Wilcox Putnam, Fontaine Fox, and H. T. Webster are the leading lights. Delray Beach is also popular with Alabamans, many of whom come here to spend the winter. Boca Raton claims the largest, most exclusive, as well as the most expensive club in Florida, though the town itself consists of no more than two stop lights, a filling station, and a few stores on either side of the main highway. The club draws its membership mostly from Philadelphia. Pompano, almost exactly halfway between Palm Beach and Miami, has not yet been developed as it deserves as a winter tourist center. The tide, rolling south from Palm Beach and north from Miami, has not yet reached it, yet it has its own peculiar claim to fame. Lying at the edge of the rich muck lands of the Northern Everglades, much of the acreage round about it is planted to beans. A large portion of these find their way north through Pompano, making it reputedly the largest F. O. B. market for winter green beans in the world.

Pompano is the last of the small hamlets that string along the road southward from Palm Beach. Eight miles beyond lies Fort Lauder-

dale, in its own right a flourishing little feet-on-the-ground city of nearly ten thousand souls, the largest town between Palm Beach and Miami, the county seat of Broward County, and, to my mind, at least, one of the most interesting spots on the Southeast Coast.

Situated at the mouth of the New River, the deepest stream in the state, with a depth of ninety feet over the greater part of its short course, Fort Lauderdale is one of the oldest settlements on the peninsula. Established in 1837 as a military outpost and trading center, it stood throughout the Seminole War of 1835-42. In 1842 it was the scene of the "Colee Massacre," a surprise attack by the Indians upon the little settlement after the supposed cessation of hostilities.

Today despite, or possibly because of, its early vicissitudes Fort Lauderdale is an amazingly sturdy and self reliant little city. Possibly, also, its proximity to Palm Beach and Miami has had something to do with this. At the height of the land boom wildcat speculators concentrated their efforts upon its two larger neighbors, overlooking Lauderdale's inherent possibilities. As a result, while there was some, the proportion of speculative building and developing was considerably less at this point, and Fort Lauderdale survived the collapse of the boom and the great depression with a much smaller proportionate loss than many a more pretentious community in the state.

With the opening of the Northern Everglades to agriculture and the subsequent development of Broward County, as one of the country's most important areas for the production of green winter vegetables, the city became an important shipping center. The need for a deep water port became rapidly apparent, and Fort Lauderdale with its deep New River Inlet seemed a logical choice. The result was Port Everglades with its controlling depth of thirty-five feet, the deepest port between Norfolk, Virginia, and New Orleans, Louisiana.

The phenomenal growth of Port Everglades is evidence that it filled a real need. Today it serves as one of the most important outlets for the immense agricultural region that extends back for miles from the coast into the Everglades, and with its extensive warehouses and refrigerating plants it is able to handle a large proportion of the produce of that area. Nor is all its traffic outbound. Much of the

inbound freight for southeastern Florida passes over the municipally owned railroad which connects its port facilities with the tracks of the Florida East Coast and Seaboard Airline railways. The terrible hurricane of 1935 which destroyed the East Coast's overseas line to Key West proved the truth of the old saw that "It's an ill wind that blows nobody good," for as a direct result the Havana car ferries, which formerly made Key West their northern terminus, now carry their wheeled cargoes to and from Port Everglades. It is estimated that over ten thousand carloads of freight annually pass this way. In addition, many of the larger cruise ships, including Miami on their schedules but unable to enter Miami's shallower harbor, debark their passengers here and send them overland for their visit to "Bagdad on Biscayne."

Not the least interesting and important fact about Port Everglades is that, with the exception of the deepening and maintenance of the harbor channel to the sea, the entire port was built and developed with local capital without Federal aid.

Fort Lauderdale does not ignore the tourist. Indeed, there is little evidence, on the surface, of its commercial importance. Rather it seems a residential city whose many comfortable homes are pleasantly situated along the banks of the New River and the numerous canals. There is an excellent beach and municipal casino, and the town itself seems an important center for the winter residents of the surrounding territory.

This impression is borne out by the facts. More than two thirds of Miami's winter traffic passes this way. Like her larger sisters, to north and south, Fort Lauderdale is an important port of call for visiting yachtsmen passing up and down along the Intracoastal Waterway. It is estimated that more than thirty-five thousand tourists annually are entertained here.

The city's slogan, "The fastest growing city in the fastest growing county in Florida," indicates that Fort Lauderdale has not escaped entirely the bite of the Florida boom virus. Unlike many city slogans, however, this one appears to have some foundation in fact.

As we pass on southward below Fort Lauderdale, we find the

roadside almost continuously built up with tourist cabins, refreshment stands of all descriptions, trailer camps, and jerry-built developments. At Dania, a hamlet five miles south, is a Seminole Indian reservation. Few of the Indians, however, remain here. They have found it more profitable to camp beside the Tamiami Trail, the broad road running from Miami to the West Coast, and so will come in for our attention in a later chapter. Hollywood, another tawdry little settlement, lies but two miles further on, and is practically a continuation of Dania. Its sole claims to fame lie in the military school which has its winter quarters here, and in the Broward County Kennel Club, at whose dog track a race meeting is held annually between December first and March fifteenth.

From Hollywood on, the motorist has his choice of two routes into Miami: the one following the broad, four lane stretch of Route U. S. 1, to join the northern end of Biscayne Boulevard, and the other swinging east to the ocean and following the shore in through Miami Beach. To my mind, at least, the latter is the preferred road, if only for the breath-taking view one gains across the sparkling waters of Biscayne Bay of the imposing skyline of Miami proper from the County Causeway.

"Bagdad on Biscayne" Miami has been called. It has also been referred to as "the Magic City." Yet the strangest thing about the city—and by this I mean the whole Miami area, including Miami Beach—is that almost anything you say of it, pleasant or unpleasant, complimentary or uncomplimentary, will be true. It is a city of paradoxes. You may dislike it intensely; yet you cannot but feel a certain sneaking admiration for it. You may fall in love with it at once; yet your love cannot blind you to its faults. You will find it, at one and the same time, the most cosmopolitan and yet the most provincial of cities. You will find it a city whose many churches attest the spiritual integrity of its people; yet one of whose hotels finds it necessary to advertise that it is "both morally and sanitarily clean." And, as if this were not paradox enough, you will find Miami Beach, a city of 14,000 souls, grown literally, if you please, from the

bottom of Biscayne Bay; and Miami itself, a city which defies the rules laid down by the economic pundits in that it serves no rich, vast hinterland, yet is today a sea and airport of growing international importance, with a permanent population of 130,000, and a winter population of more than twice that number.

Just as the soil roundabout the city produces the most amazing results with all manner of fruits and vegetables, so the air of the region must have exerted a parallel effect upon the growth of Miami. The story of its past reads with all the fantasy and absurdity of a fairy tale; and yet for all it is bizarre in the extreme, it is nonetheless true. Miami's paradoxes pertain even to its past.

It is said that as early as 1567 that same Menendez who drove the French from the Rivière du Mai and established Saint Augustine visited the site of Miami and left a priest and a few soldiers in the Indian village he found at the mouth of the Miami River. Whether he left them alive or dead is not disclosed. At any rate he does not seem to have troubled his head about them afterwards.

It was not until 1836 that any further attempt at white settlement was made at this point. In that year the Government established Fort Dallas, at the mouth of the river, as a base of operations against the Seminoles. When the Seminole War gradually subsided and finally came to an end without benefit of treaty, the fort was transformed into a trading post, and in that capacity it served for nearly a half a century. In 1896, when Flagler brought his rails to Biscayne Bay, Miami consisted only of two small dwellings, a storehouse, and the old fort. Once a month, on trading days, when perhaps fifteen or twenty Indians would come out of the 'Glades in their long dugout canoes, there would be quite a crowd in town.

Despite the fact that Flagler's hotel, The Royal Palm, did not do as well as had his other ventures, the coming of the railroad had the usual magical effect upon Miami. Fourteen years later, by 1910, its population had jumped—from something in the teens, remember—to a little more than five thousand. By 1922 it was thirty thousand, and the boom was on.

It is fairly safe to say that Miami today owes much of its phenom-

enal success to Miami Beach. It is the steady flow of tourists that is responsible for its prosperity and rapid growth. Each year thousands of them flock thither, drawn primarily by the tempting prospect of basking in the warm sun upon the beach while the rest of the country shivers in the grip of winter. Each year new thousands of them remain, either to take up permanent residence or to buy property to which they will return winter after winter. They may become residents of Miami, or Coral Gables or Coconut Grove, or Miami Shores or Opalocka, or of any one of a half a dozen other sub-divisions and suburbs; but it is the beach that draws them in the first place—that and the sun, and the chance to enjoy both in comfort.

For many years Miami Beach was no more than a narrow strip of sand, backed by dense, dank mangrove swamp, that shut off Miami's view of the ocean and sent off vast clouds of hungry mosquitoes, when the wind was right, to feed upon the inhabitants of the mainland.

As long ago as 1882 an attempt was made to utilize this strip of waste land. The wreck of the *Providencia*, off Palm Beach, had proven that coconuts could be grown in Florida, and in that year two New Jersey growers, E. T. Field and Ezra Osborn, decided to establish a plantation at Miami Beach to supply the American market. Subsequently hundreds of thousands of the big nuts were imported, dumped overboard, floated ashore, beached and planted. The coconuts grew, but the market did not. Field and Osborn failed, and another New Jersey farmer, John S. Collins, took over their holdings.

Whether Collins had any vision of the future of Miami Beach at that time, as he certainly did later, would be hard to say now. At any rate he had no illusions as to the future of the coconut market. He began experimenting with other crops, and found that he could grow avocados in profitable quantities.

Now avocados are a perishable crop which, in those days, before mechanical refrigeration had reached its present state of perfection, had to be rushed to market as quickly as possible. In the beginning it was necessary for Collins to ship his produce all the way down the ocean front, around Cape Florida, and back up to the railroad. This

was expensive in loss of time and in increased handling, to mention nothing of the loss of fruit spoiled because of the delay. Accordingly Collins built a canal directly from Miami Beach to the railroad at Miami.

In the meantime Miami, under the impetus given it by the railroad, had been growing at a modest pace. Perhaps it was this growth that gave Collins a hint of the future. At any rate, it must have been at this time that he began to dream of the development of his shore property at Miami Beach, for he began the construction of a wooden bridge, across Biscayne Bay from the mainland, following the route of the present Venetian Way, to be the longest wooden bridge in the world.

This was in 1912. Collins found himself running short of cash before the bridge was half done, and for a time the future must have seemed black for his schemes. Fortunately he was able to interest a visiting millionaire, Carl G. Fisher, who had just retired from the directorship of the Prestolite Company, in the project. Fisher took a hand. The bridge was completed, and the development of Miami Beach was begun. The Collins interests had given Fisher two hundred acres of land. He bought two hundred and sixty more. Dredges were set to work pumping sand from the bottom of the bay. The mangroves were cut away, and the swamp filled with the dredged sand. The land thus created was laid out in building lots and subdivisions and offered for sale to the public.

That Collins and Fisher had guessed right was proven by the fact that the land sold. It not only sold, it resold. Others came to speculate, both at Miami Beach and on the mainland. By 1919 the hectic boom period had begun. The short depression of 1920 only delayed things for a moment. By 1922 the speculators were organized. They carried their operations north and advertised extensively with full-page spreads in northern newspapers. The public caught on eagerly and flocked southward by the thousands to take a hand in the game. Today many a tale is told of people who sold their lots for fabulous prices, only to see the buyer turn about and sell again for even more astounding sums. Men pyramided their holdings and made paper

fortunes. Even those who were wise enough to buy and sell for cash put everything they had into lots. Hand in hand with the real estate speculation went the building boom, and the demand for building supplies became such that it could not be met. Flagler's line, the Florida East Coast, double-tracked its entire right of way from Jacksonville to Miami, in order to be able to carry the increased load which that demand put upon it. The Seaboard Airline hastily extended its tracks southward. Hundreds of ships of all descriptions passed in and out of the harbor daily. And still the demand was not met. Prices rocketed to outlandish heights.

The beginning of the end came when the railroads, swamped with freight, were forced to declare an embargo on all but perishable shipments in order that the growing city might be fed. That was the handwriting on the wall. But for months afterwards the feverish activity continued. Building materials poured in by sea. Dock space was at a premium. The harbor was crowded. Other ships waited outside for a chance to get in. Then on January 10, 1926, the *Prins Valdemar* sank completely blocking the narrow channel and preventing all ingress to and egress from the harbor.

The *Prins Valdemar* was a steel, four-masted barkantine rigged ship. Formerly a schoolship, the property of the Danish government, she had been bought by a group of young men and towed to Miami, where she was to be done over and redecorated as a palatial floating hotel.

The backers of this project had already selected the site at which the *Prins Valdemar* was to be anchored, a point not far from where the Venetian Way reaches Miami Beach. Much of the decorating had already been done. Nearly all the furniture and supplies were on board. But there was one hitch. The place at which she was to be anchored was shallow; so was the way into it. And the *Prins Valdemar* was a heavy ship, well ballasted with rock. She drew too much water.

Two courses were open to the owners: one, to cut away the heavy masts and lighten the ship that way, the other, to throw her ballast overboard. The masts were important. They were props for the

business, quite necessary adjuncts to the nautical character of the new hostelry. Cut away her masts and she would no longer resemble a ship, but the ballast was another story. What guest would care whether she was ballasted or not? And if ballast was necessary for safety it would be simple enough to replace it once the *Prins Valdemar* was anchored in her permanent location. Let the ballast go overboard, the owners decided in the face of expert advice to the contrary. So overboard the ballast went, and was promptly sold for building material.

It was a gusty day when the *Prins Valdemar*, riding high-sided and top-heavy without her ballast, was towed out of her berth and started on her journey across the Bay. Those who understood such things watched in some apprehension as she plowed with stately dignity down the channel behind the fussy tug, and they heaved a deep breath of relief as they saw the tug turn aside and swing the *Prins Valdemar's* bows away towards her final destination.

But they felt their relief too soon. It was at just that moment that the capricious wind chose to loose a gusty blast upon the old ship's high, naked side. The *Prins Valdemar*, beneath the force of the blow, heeled far over to port. The onlookers ashore gasped in dismay. For one second—two—she seemed to hang in the balance, almost as if she might yet right herself. Then with the weary finality of a buxom matron settling herself for a good long rest she rolled over the rest of the way and laid her masts upon the water. Before the bewildered tow-boat captain could make up his mind what to do, she had sunk, bow and stern across the channel, bottling up Miami's harbor as effectively as if it had been mined by an enemy with that purpose in mind.

Naturally every effort possible was made to raise her, for nothing could pass in or out of the harbor until it was done. An attempt was made to cut a new channel around her, but a series of reefs impeded the progress of the dredges, and it was weeks before a way could be blasted through. In the meantime the damage was done. Time contracts defaulted and many builders went bankrupt. Plans for new building were shelved, and panic gripped the speculators. By the

time the channel was reopened the boom was over. Miami's tower of cards had collapsed, and the casualties were appalling.

Of course the *Prins Valdemar*, the innocent cause of the debacle, was finally raised and the channel re-opened—too late. The *Valdemar's* masts were cut away and she was pumped out and allowed to right herself, after which she was towed off and beached at the northern end of Bayfront Park, where she was converted into an aquarium, and where she still lies today, secure from further mischief in a solid bed of concrete.

As if this incident were not enough, nature piled disaster upon calamity, by visiting the city in September with one of the worst hurricanes Florida has known. Sound, solid construction has little to fear from one of these tropical storms. But Miami's boom time building proved anything but solid. Jerry-built cottages and bungalows, boats in the harbor, unprotected homes, all took wings and were scattered to the four winds. Many of the big hotels and larger office buildings then under construction were seriously damaged. Shipping and yachts in the harbor were hurled ashore, some of them almost into the very lobbies of the hotels lining Biscayne Boulevard, and the Boulevard itself was laid waste. The entire city was a shambles.

At the time it seemed impossible that Miami could ever recover from the blow, but her amazing comeback and present prosperity are living proofs of the fundamental soundness of her foundations. Miami's growth during the boom years was astounding enough, but what is even more wonderful is the fact that in spite of the collapse of 1926 and in spite of the great depression of the thirties that growth has never ceased. It has slackened, perhaps, and become more stable, but it continues today. And it is a safe prediction that it will continue for many years to come.

Miami today is a great sprawling, bustling youngster, differing from many another up and coming community only in the glory of her winter sunshine and the fact that her life is dedicated to the entertainment of outsiders—for without the winter tourist Miami's *raison*

d'être would vanish. That she has been at some pains to present a pleasing exterior is evident. When she is seen from across the Bay, her many-windowed pink and white skyscrapers rising sheer from the flat Florida plain to be outlined against the deep azure of the low hung sky, it is small wonder that her people have called her "the magic city." There can be no denying that Biscayne Boulevard is one of the most beautiful avenues to be found anywhere, or that Flagler Avenue is one of the most gaily colorful of streets.

And Miami's efforts to entertain her casual visitors do not end with such external trappings. In a score of night clubs, in her two magnificent race tracks, to say nothing of the dog tracks, in her excellent municipal golf course, in the Jai-alai fronton, in her parks and in her beaches, in her yacht clubs and casino, she provides amusement for a variety of tastes. Miami Beach, which must be lumped with Miami for all practical purposes, whether or no, is a glorified combination of Atlantic City and Coney Island with more than a slight dash of Newport thrown in. She resembles Atlantic City in the multiplicity of her hotels, even in their architecture and in the life of many of her streets back from the beach itself. Her amusement park section almost out-Coney's Coney, while the shops of Lincoln Road and the palatial residences of the north end are as haughtily exclusive and snobbish as anything in Newport.

LAST FRONTIER

Chapter III

THE traveler in search of the sun, approaching the tropical tip of Florida from the west, will find his most practicable route lying along the Gulf Coast of the peninsula. This way lies through a group of small, typically Floridan cities; as well as through Tampa, the third city in point of size in the state.

Though none of these towns could rightfully be considered tropical by a dispassionate observer, still, nearly all of them consider themselves to lie well enough within the borderland to be classed as such; and each one of them, it must be admitted, has its own peculiar attraction which is worthy of mention.

Tarpon Springs, an attractive little city at the mouth of the Anclote River, and the northernmost of the group, sets great store by the paintings of George Inness, Junior, on view at the Church of the Good Shepherd; but its principal attraction is the Greek colony, with its sponge fleet, which makes its headquarters here. Formerly Key West was the center of the sponge industry in North America. Following the Spanish War, however, this activity shifted northward and settled in Tarpon Springs. Today the little city on the Anclote supplies nearly all the sponges for the American trade, and is one of the world's largest markets for that commodity. A visit to the sponge dock when the curious little pot-bellied boats are in is well worth while. On the Feast of Epiphany, January 6, the Greek Orthodox Church conducts an unusual ceremony at Tarpon Springs in the course of which a golden cross, duly blessed, is flung into the waters of the Bayou. The best divers of the fleet plunge in after it, and the

diver recovering it carries it ashore to kneel before the Archbishop for his blessing. According to their belief, this diver and his boat will be blessed with particular good fortune throughout the coming season.

Fourteen miles south of Tarpon Springs is Clearwater, a resort community with an excellent beach. From here one may either turn eastward to Tampa direct via the Davis Causeway, or, if one is sufficiently curious, push on to the metropolis of the West Coast by way of Saint Petersburg—"Old Saint Pete" to its familiars—and the new Gandy Bridge. Saint Petersburg is also a purely resort city, and a great favorite with oldsters from all parts of the country. Many thousands of them, perhaps drawn by the city's claim of "three hundred sixty-five days of sunshine every year," have come there to spend their declining years, and their presence gives the city a distinctly elderly flavor. One Saint Petersburg paper, supporting the sunshine claim, gives away its entire home edition on any day when the sun fails to shine. That the paper has done so for more than twenty years would seem to indicate that there is more than a little basis for the claim, extravagant though it may sound.

Tampa, eastward across Old Tampa Bay from Saint Petersburg, is a city with a past; a comparatively recent one to be sure, but nonetheless interesting for that. That Tampa's past goes back many centuries to the earliest discoverers of the new world, is probable but not definitely established. Tampan's point proudly to a gigantic live oak in Plant Park and tell you that beneath its spreading branches the explorer de Soto sat in council with the chiefs of the surrounding Indian tribes, but there is nothing to back up the legend. It is probable that de Narvaez put into Tampa Bay in 1528; and it is fairly well established that it was somewhere in the neighborhood that Ponce de León, the discoverer of Florida, received his death wound. It is also equally probable that these waters were the haunt of pirates—which may be safely said of nearly all our southern coastline, from Hatteras around the tip of Florida and back along the Gulf Coast to the bayous of Texas and Louisiana.

But the first settlement on Tampa Bay of which there is any offi-

cial record was established in 1823 when a detachment of American troops arrived there from Pensacola and built a log fort which for many years bore the name of "Fort Brooke." Tampa, the Indian name for the region, was not adopted as the name of the village until many years later—after the final ending of the Seminole wars, when the army had abandoned the post.

In 1885, the year in which Tampa was "discovered" by Henry Flagler's rival, Henry B. Plant, the population of the town was only a little over seven hundred. Plant, who headed the South Florida Railroad, since absorbed by the Atlantic Coast Line, was seeking a terminal port on the Gulf of Mexico when he came first to Tampa. He recognized in Tampa's fine, unused, natural harbor, that which he sought, and was quick to begin construction. There is a story, so well established as to have become almost legendary, to the effect that when Plant's rails reached the Gulf, Plant triumphantly wired Flagler, his friendly enemy: "My railroad has reached Tampa."

"Where," Flagler wired back, "is Tampa?"

"Follow the crowds," was Plant's reply.

That was in 1885. Five years later Tampa's population had jumped from seven hundred twenty to five thousand five hundred. By 1898, when the Spanish-American War began, it had a population of fifteen thousand. Today the city proper numbers more than one hundred thousand, and is the state's third largest city. If its various suburbs are included, as they sometimes are, in what is known as the "Greater Tampa area" the population numbers about one hundred thirty thousand.

Up to the outbreak of the Spanish War Tampa was comparatively unknown outside Florida. After the declaration of war, however, it became the principal port of embarkation for troops bound to Cuba and Puerto Rico. Troop trains converged upon the little city, ranking officers established headquarters there, supplies for the army poured in, straining the facilities of the port. Epidemics broke out among the troops, war correspondents flocked southward, and the name of Tampa burst like a bomb upon a country which had before been

scarcely aware of her existence. From that day onward her growth was steady.

Plant, like Flagler, was a hotel builder. In Tampa he built the enormous and ornate Tampa Bay Hotel with the same lavish hand that Flagler had used in the construction of the Ponce de León in Saint Augustine. For years this imposing pile, topped with a half a dozen or more neo-moorish spires in the best style of the eighteen-eighties, attracted curiosity seekers from all parts of the world. But even before Plant's death its popularity had begun to decline.

Plant bequeathed the enormous structure to the city whose fortunes he had been so instrumental in promoting. It proved a doubtful legacy. For a time the city attempted to operate it as a hotel, but the venture proved a losing one. The hotel was closed and the grounds around it were turned into a municipal park. One wing of the enormous structure was given over to house the city's art museum, but the rest of it remained for years a drain on the city treasury, and more than once the city fathers considered tearing it down. In 1933 someone hit upon the splendid idea of turning this old man of the sea over to the newly organized University of Tampa. The University, of course, was delighted. They pay no rent under their present ten year lease, but assume the burden of maintenance. And today the hotel-university is doing nicely, thank you.

But if Plant's hotel proved only temporarily successful, at least his judgment of the locality proved to be based on sound commercial foresight. From a little fishing village of less than a thousand souls Tampa has grown to one of the most important seaports of our eastern seaboard. Unlike Miami she serves a vast rich hinterland. Nitrates from Chile, potash from Germany, bananas from the Gulf and the Caribbean, and tobacco from Cuba form the bulk of her imports, while phosphates from the mines of Polk County are the largest single item of export. Many small independently owned vessels operate in the banana trade, while a number of steamship lines ply from Tampa Bay to all parts of the world. Ships run on regular schedules between Tampa and several European ports, as well as ports in the Mediterranean, in South and Central America and the Orient. A half

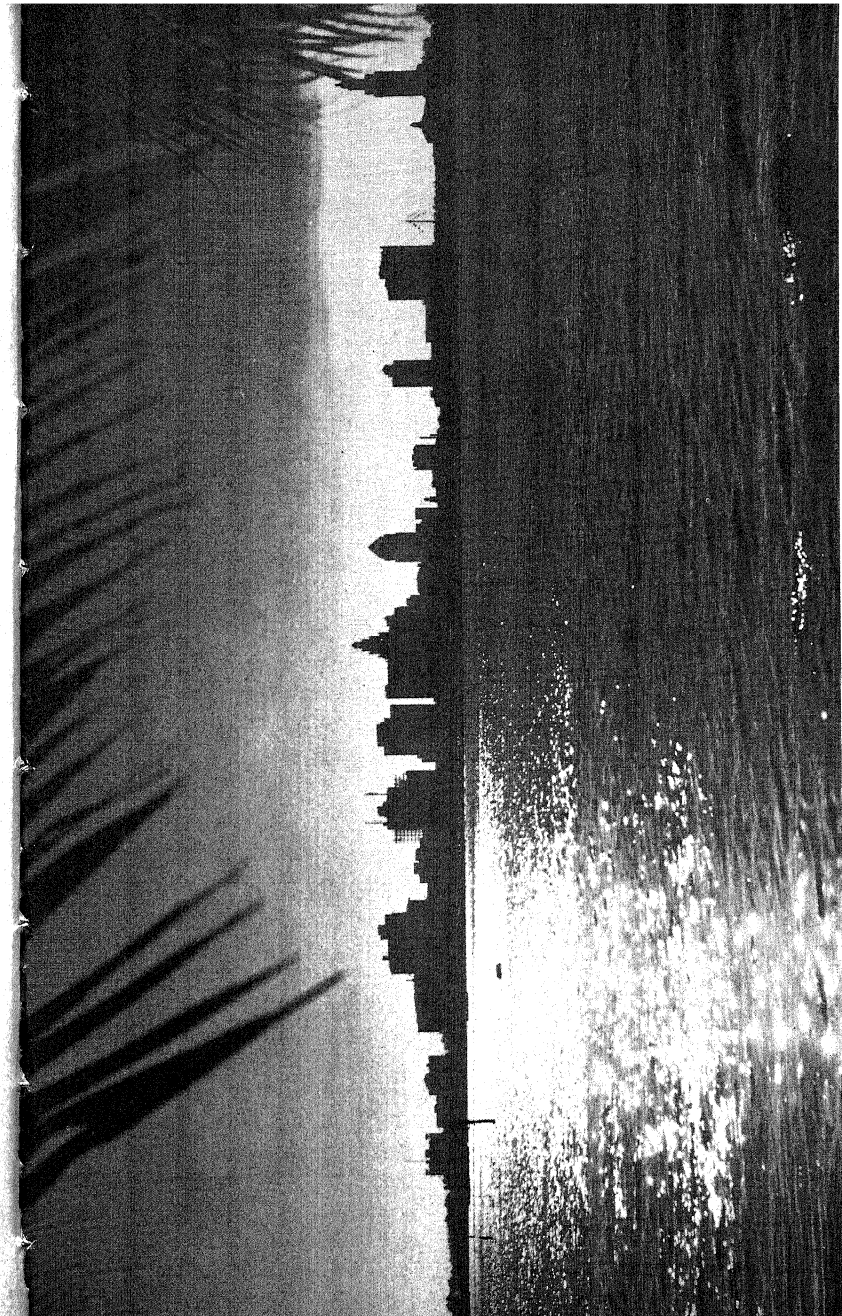
a dozen lines of freighters, plying the Atlantic and Gulf Coasts, as well as the tankers of a half a score of large oil companies, make it a regular port of call. In addition, several passenger lines connect Tampa with Havana, New Orleans, Philadelphia, Central America, Puerto Rico, and the islands of the Caribbean. Almost three thousand ships a year enter the harbor, and of these more than a third are ocean vessels. Many of them are craft of ten thousand tons or more.

But Tampa's commercial importance is not confined to her maritime activities. For many years Key West led the United States, if not the world, in the production of fine cigars. Her climate was ideal for the preservation of the fine Cuban leaf so necessary in their manufacture, and her location, across the Florida Straits from Havana, made it a convenient port of entry for the tobacco. There were drawbacks, however. It was difficult to transport the finished product, and the Key West factories were constantly becoming involved in labor troubles.

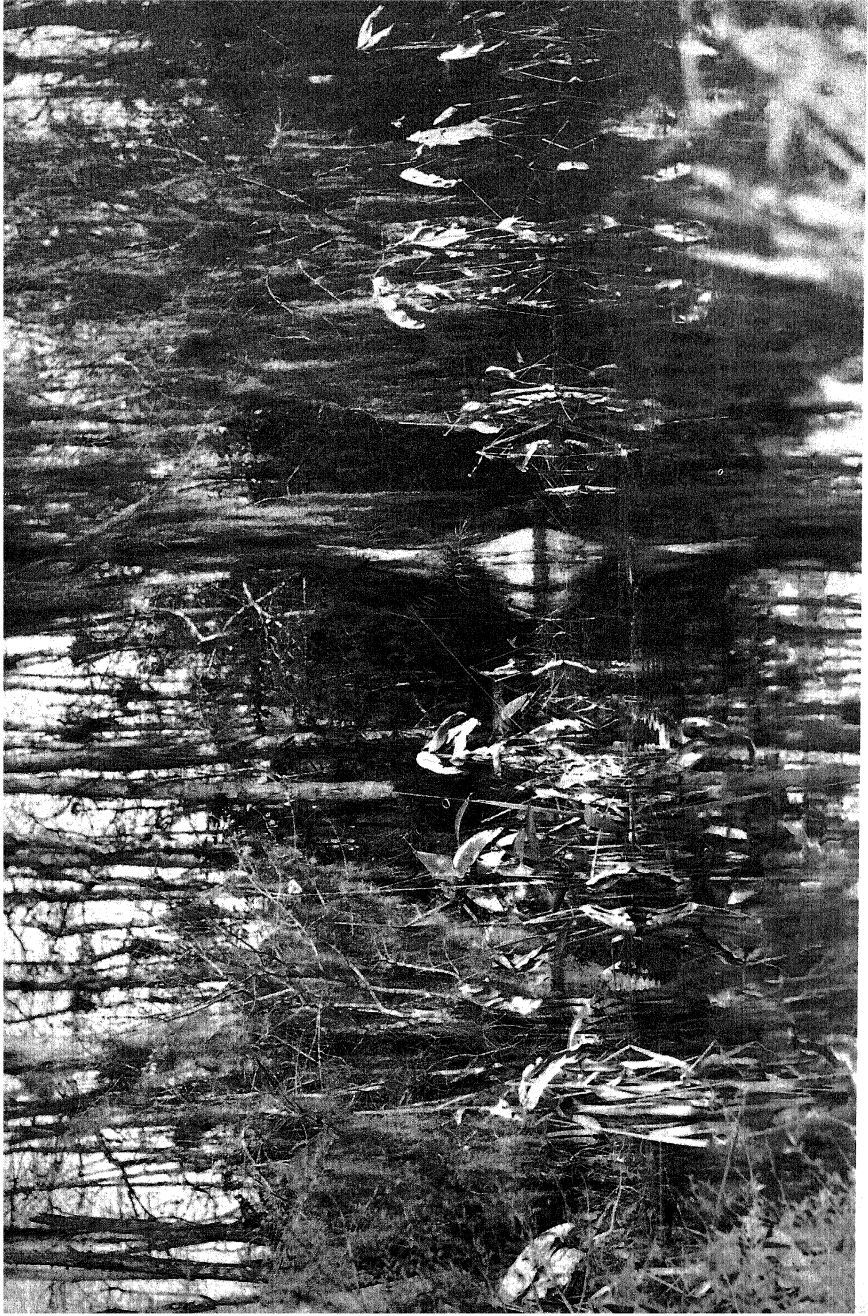
Consequently, as Tampa grew and increased in importance, the cigar manufacturers one by one began to turn to her in preference. At first they opened branch factories and installed modern machinery and methods. They found that in Tampa they could turn out cigars in mass quantities; not such good cigars, perhaps, as had previously come from Key West and Havana, but good enough to meet the popular demand, and at a much lower price. Today Tampa leads the world in the mass production of cheap cigars. Havana still holds the blue ribbon for the quality of her product. And Key West, once the pride of the industry, now turns out but a comparative handful of cigars of excellent quality, rolled entirely by hand in family "factories," usually a single room in a three or four room dwelling.

Tampa's aspect is not tropical, though her year round temperature average is much the same as that of Miami. Rather, in general appearance, she resembles Jacksonville in the number and size and general clustering of her buildings. The mark of industry and commerce is as strong upon her as is the mark of the tourist traffic upon Miami.

In leaving Tampa, if one goes round by the road encircling the bay instead of crossing by the more rapid and direct ferry to Braden-



Miami's magic towers rise in silhouette across the sparkling waters of Biscayne Bay.



The gray beard cypress of the Everglades.

ton, one passes through what is by far the most interesting section of this metropolis of the West Coast; the section known as Ybor City. Ybor City is the Spanish-Cuban district in which live some twenty thousand Cubans, Spaniards, and Puerto Ricans and their families, employees for the most part of the numerous cigar factories. It is a community in itself, having its own restaurants, clubs, and social life—even its own language—separate and distinct from the remainder of the city. It is as though a portion of some Cuban city had been lifted bodily and dropped down here in the heart of Tampa. Its atmosphere is wholly foreign, and a visit to its shops and cafés is well worth including in the program of everyone who visits the city. Nearby are more than one hundred fifty cigar factories, a visit to one of which is also well worth the short time it takes. Most of them will welcome visitors who come in the morning.

Southward from the great indentation of Tampa Bay the coast line straightens out once more for a short distance, and the hurrying tourist passes in quick succession through the three resort cities of Bradenton, Sarasota, and Venice. Of these three only Sarasota is worthy, for our purposes, of more than a hurried passing glance. Formerly the winter home of the late John Ringling, Sarasota boasts an excellent art museum sponsored by him. There is an art school in connection with the museum, and, in addition, at his death Mr. Ringling left to the State of Florida his palatial home, to be operated as a museum of Venetian Art in connection with the Ringling Art Museum. Sarasota is also winter headquarters for the Ringling Brothers-Barnum and Bailey circus.

Venice, originally begun as a retiring place for members by the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers, was later taken up by Doctor Fred. H. Albee of New York for development as a medical center. If the fullest extent of this therapeutic dream was not quite realized, at least the Florida Medical Center is one of the largest of its kind in the country and its fame is widespread.

Fifty miles southward of Venice, on the shores of Charlotte Harbor, is the sleepy little village of Punta Gorda. Punta Gorda boasts one large modern resort hotel and excellent tarpon fishing in season.

Below Punta Gorda we pass through a long, dreary stretch of the sparse piney country so common in this part of the world, where cattle roam the roads at will, and it behooves the speeding motorist to beware.

After twenty-four miles of this somber countryside, Fort Myers looms as a haven of rest for the weary traveler. And there is no denying Fort Myers' attractions. A pretty little city, on the banks of the Caloosahatchee River, Fort Myers was "discovered" first by Thomas A. Edison, who bought property there and made it his winter home as long ago as 1884, when the city's population numbered only eight hundred. Among others who followed Edison to Fort Myers was Henry Ford, whose home is pointed out with pride by the local citizenry.

If Fort Myers has not boomed as has many another Florida city it is not for any lack of beauty. One of the pleasantest and most impressive avenues in Florida is First Street, on which the tourist from the north enters the city. From one end to the other it is lined with stately royal palms. The story is current of a northern lady, gazing for the first time in her life upon these graceful and dignified trees.

"Very pretty indeed," was her comment, "but what did they look like before you put all that cement around the trunks?"

Below Fort Myers the road continues southward, thirty-seven miles, to Naples, a small but pleasantly attractive little resort community—the last on the West Coast. Beyond Naples the way swings abruptly eastward towards Miami and the Everglades.

Speaking in the strictest technical sense of the term, "Tamiami Trail" refers to the entire route between Tampa and Miami. Literally, it is as applicable to the portion between Venice and Sarasota as it is to that between Ochopee and Coral Gables. To me, however, and to most others, I believe, the name calls up only visions of the southern half—mind pictures of that section of the highway lying between Naples and Miami.

There are good and valid reasons for this impression. For one, to the northward of Naples the countryside is not vastly different from that which the tourist will encounter elsewhere in Florida. But

to east and south of that point one comes quite suddenly into what is probably the most lushly wild and tropical region to be found anywhere on the North American continent. In addition there is the road itself. Broad, straight, and well paved, it is possible to maintain a pace on it that would be suicidal elsewhere. But no matter how fast he may travel, no matter how great his hurry, the motorist who passes this way cannot fail to be impressed with the gigantic task which faced its builders. It is a truly magnificent piece of engineering accomplishment. And as if this were not enough, there are the Everglades themselves.

In the minds of a great many people the term "Everglades" stands for a vast, unknown swampland, rank with jungle growth, infested with snakes and alligators and other lesser reptiles, a wet, waste, worthless wilderness. This is no doubt a hangover from our grammar school days, for at the time that most of us were children the Everglades, indeed almost all of the southern tip of the Florida peninsula was terra incognita—and was marked as such upon the maps in our geographies; a land of imaginary evils, untrod by human feet save possibly those of a handful of Indians.

Today the Everglades are somewhat better understood. To be sure, there are still large portions of them that remain unexplored, virgin territory—America's last frontier. But much of what was but a few years ago completely unknown is today being rapidly reclaimed and settled. Much of the northern portion has been drained and canalized, and the muck lands thus recovered have proven to be among the richest and most fertile growing country to be found anywhere. The Tamiami Trail cuts a straight broad swath through the heart of the central portion, and most of the southern, and least known portion, has been set aside for conversion into a National Park.

The Everglades extend as far north as Lake Okeechobee and the Caloosahatchee and as far south as Cape Sable at the tip of the peninsula. On the east they are separated from the ocean by a narrow strip of slightly higher coastal land which extends southward to a point a little below Miami. A similar strip of higher ground separates them from the Gulf of Mexico, on the west, as far southward as

Naples. They cover an area of some five thousand square miles—or approximately four million acres—and have an average width of fifty miles.

To say that all this area is one vast swamp is not quite correct. A large part of it may truthfully be so described, but the opposite is also true. Vast sections of it, in ordinary times, are quite dry and habitable.

The prime circumstance which has led to this popular misconception is that of elevation. The Everglades are low lying—so low lying that in the southern portion they are likely to be inundated by an unusually high tide, while the bank level of Lake Okeechobee is only eighteen feet above the sea. In addition to this the Everglades are flat—as flat as the proverbial palm of your hand—and this flatness makes the problem of drainage an extremely difficult one.

This question of drainage was the chief one facing the engineers engaged in the reclamation of the northern Everglades. Lake Okeechobee receives the full benefit of the flood waters from the Kissimmee River, but has no natural outlet. Quite naturally, in times of heavy rainfall in the interior portions of the peninsula, the lake overflowed its banks and spread its waters over the surrounding flats. Some of these flood waters found their way into the Caloosahatchee, which rises just west of the lake. Others seeped off to the southward. But much of it simply lay stagnant upon the land, and accounted for no small part of the Everglades' evil name.

This was the state of affairs when the State was faced with the task of reclaiming the land. That it would be a difficult and expensive business was self evident, yet such was the known fertility of the rich muck soil of the Everglades that no price seemed too high to pay for its recovery. The results have gone far towards justifying that judgment.

The first move in the program was to provide an outlet for the lake. This was doubly accomplished, first, in a western drainage canal carrying the flood waters out into the Caloosahatchee River, which empties into the Gulf of Mexico at Fort Myers; and, secondly, in an eastern canal, the Saint Lucie, which furnished an outlet to the

Atlantic at Stuart. These two outlets proved a great help and opened much land to cultivation, but they were inadequate to cope alone with the problem. In times of highest water the big lake still overflowed its banks.

The answer was obvious, and as rapidly as it could be done work was pushed forward on other canals. A further outlet was cut through between Canal Point, on the lake, and West Palm Beach on Lake Worth; an outlet which, incidentally, forms a part of the new Florida Cross State canal, opened in 1937 and already popular with small boat owners as providing an inland water route between the East and West Coasts.

More canals were built draining off to the southward, and for a time it seemed as if the problem had been solved. Subsidiary canals drained the land, and much of the region surrounding the lake was cleared and planted. It was found to be productive beyond the wildest dreams of those who had supported the project. Okeechobee no longer overflowed its banks, even in the rainiest of seasons. Miles of the rich muck lands were reclaimed, and towns grew up around the lake. Almost everything that would grow anywhere could be grown there. Valencia oranges, the tender avocado, not to mention all manner of common garden vegetables, thrived. Experiments with sugar cane proved highly successful. A mill was erected and hundreds of thousands of acres were planted to cane. The future of the region seemed well assured, when, without warning, came disaster.

The Florida hurricane of 1928 was one of the worst in the history of the State. Around Okeechobee and the northern Everglades the fall bean crop had been a good one, and as usual thousands of negro pickers had flocked into the region from other parts of the State, from Georgia and the Carolinas, from Alabama and Mississippi and Louisiana and Texas. Some even came from the Bahamas. The crop was finished, and the picking done, and though some of the pickers moved out, down to the coast, before the rains came, many stayed behind to help start the next crop. Thus, in addition to the regular inhabitants, there were many outsiders living through the district, for the most part in rude temporary shacks hastily constructed to pro-

vide no more than simple shelter for the field labor during the harvest time.

The rains that fell were heavy, and they covered a large area all up and down the peninsula. The waters of the Kissimmee rose rapidly. Lake Okeechobee also rose steadily and at an alarming rate. The flood gates of all the canals were opened, allowing the hurrying waters to rush away seaward, but still the lake waters rose until they all but overflowed their banks. Then, just as it seemed that if they rose another fraction of an inch they must break over, the rise ceased. People around the lake, who had begun to be nervous, breathed more easily. The danger was past. The system worked. The canals would take care of the surplus water.

But there was a further element which no one, apparently, had taken into consideration. Just about at the time the waters of Okeechobee steadied at their high point, storm warnings, forecasting a wind of hurricane proportions, were flashed up and down the coast from Palm Beach to Cape Canaveral and Key West.

In the Everglades not much attention was paid to this. For the most part hurricanes follow the coast. They hit somewhere along the Atlantic seaboard and bounce northward along the shore. Or else they slip around or through the Keys and follow the curve of the West Coast north. A few of the weather wise picked up their belongings and headed for safety—as far from the falling barometer as they could get.

It was these cautious souls who were the lucky ones. The storm struck first at Palm Beach, hurled itself across Lake Worth at West Palm Beach, and then whirled away westward over the Everglades. At Lake Okeechobee it scooped up the flood waters, as in a giant bucket, and flung them upon the little city of Moore Haven at the western end, demolishing it completely. In that tidal wave—for it was nothing less—hundreds of lives were lost and thousands of dollars worth of property were destroyed. The people, huddled in their houses, could not escape. There was no high ground for them to which to flee save the short strip of diversion dyke at the mouth of the Caloosahatchee Canal. A few who were lucky enough to reach

this point of safety were saved, but many more were swept away. No accurate count of the total dead has ever been made, but it is estimated that more than two thousand perished.

One might think that such a disaster would spell finish to the development of the northern Everglades, but the rich muck soil was too valuable to be abandoned, even after such a costly lesson. The canal system had proven itself able to take care of almost any flood. With a little deepening of the two main channels running west from the lake to the Caloosahatchee and east from Canal Point to Lake Worth and with an additional bit of straightening and deepening of the Caloosahatchee itself, the drainage system could be made adequate to handle any possible volume of water. But it was wind as much as water that had to be guarded against. It was the wind that had lifted the waters of the lake above its banks and flung it across the land. When that had happened the only safe place in the storm had been on the high ground of the diversion dyke.

The answer to that was obvious. The only sure way to guard against a repetition of the disaster was to build a similar dyke all around the lake, and it was to this that the State's every effort was immediately turned. It was estimated at the time that such a program would cost some three million dollars.

Today the project is complete. The Caloosahatchee and the Caloosahatchee Canal were widened, deepened and straightened. So was the Canal Point-Lake Worth Canal. Today their combined systems form the Florida Cross State Canal, having a depth average of eight feet and a width that varies from eighty to two hundred feet—more than sufficient for drainage purposes. In addition the Okeechobee Dyke is finished. It is twenty-five feet high, with a width of two hundred feet at the base and twenty feet at the top. It completely encircles the lake.

If the final cost was nearly seven times the original estimate it was well worth it. Today this area produces almost half of all the string beans annually consumed in the United States! Other vegetables supplying the winter market do equally well. Sometimes it is possible to harvest as many as four crops a year from the same land, and three

crops annually are the rule rather than the exception. At Port Mayaca are extensive orange groves that bear prodigious crops. Avocados also thrive there. In 1937 the region produced some five thousand bushels of the green, soapy, succulent fruits. Daily experiments are going forward with numerous varieties of fruits and vegetables, and even flowers, with amazing results. In addition, at Clewiston, the United States Sugar Corporation has extensive acreage planted to sugar cane, as well as a mill for extracting the raw sugar from the cane. This mill annually produces some forty thousand tons of raw sugar, which it ships north for refining. The success of this project, together with that of experiments made by the Department of Agriculture in the growing of cane, prove that sugar can be raised, ground, and delivered to the refinery at a lower cost per pound in Florida than any other part of the United States or her possessions. Only Cuba, with her vast cane fields and enormous centrals, can deliver the raw sugar to the refineries at a lower price. Owing to quota restrictions, however, there has been no further expansion in this field. But some day Florida may compete successfully with Cuba in the production of sugar.

But this northward diversion has carried us well out of our way. The traveler who would see the development of the northern Glades must make a wide detour either from Fort Myers, Fort Pierce, or West Palm Beach. That there are other avenues of approach goes without saying, but none of them fall within the scope of this book.

After leaving Naples, the Tamiami Trail sweeps off east south-east, blazing a trail as nearly straight as might be, into the heart of the Everglades.

At first there is little noticeable change in the countryside. The straggling piney woods continue. The same signs, some bright and shiny with new paint, others battered, weather beaten, askew, are tacked to the tree trunks. Now and again we get a whiff of pleasantly resinous smoke, or a cow ambles across the road, stopping perhaps in the middle to stare stupidly at our rapidly approaching radiator. Aside from this there is no sign of life anywhere to be seen, until the cross road for Collier City bursts suddenly upon us.

Collier City—on some maps still called Marco—is situated upon the largest of the Ten Thousand Islands, as the series of mangrove keys stretching from Naples along the coast to Cape Sable is called. It is named for Barron Collier, the owner and developer of most of this section, and is a starting point for fishing and hunting expeditions along the coast. Some of the world's finest tarpon waters are found hereabouts.

The crossroads, with its handful of filling stations and roadside stands, is scarcely more than a swish as we zip past. Beyond we plunge again into flat, wooded country, with the road stretching out straight before us, bordered on either hand by a ditch of dark blackish water. At first there seems but little difference in the character of the land, but gradually a subtle change begins to make itself felt. Indeed, so imperceptibly does this change come about that a person not highly sensitive to his surroundings would probably not notice it until it was complete. Little by little at first, and then more rapidly, the pines thin out and give way to cypress—gray, gaunt, and stunted in appearance. And as the pines disappear the life seems to leave the land. It is as though a great blight had cut a wide swath, killing everything that lay in its path. The naked gray trees with their thin wispy whiskers of grizzled moss, the brushy, leafless undergrowth, tangled and well nigh impenetrable, the bare, knobby, cypress knees, upthrust through the rank brush, all bear the aspect of death. Of man there is no sign beyond the road itself. Even the advertising posters seem to have become discouraged, and appear now only at infrequent intervals, huddled together in little clusters as if taking comfort in one another's company. Once a lumber railroad flings itself across the road and loses itself to northward in the grizzly wilderness.

This is the "Big Cypress Swamp," and it is not so lifeless as it appears to the passing motorist. The trees themselves, though they seem to be water-killed, are alive and growing. It is not the nature of cypress to be verdant. Back in the tangled fastnesses are the haunts of the little Florida black bear: of wildcats, panthers, coon, turkeys and alligators. If the motorist is lucky and is possessed of a sharp eye he may catch a glimpse of one of the great lizards floating lazily in

the canal by the roadside, only his eyes and snout showing above the surface. Or he may see one of the small swampland deer plunging away in graceful flight through the brush. Birds he will surely see, great clumsy herons, white ibis and egrets, and others, sitting solemnly in the treetops, tamely watching him speed by. But let him stop and try to get a picture. They will not wait for him to set his camera. They have learned enough of automobiles to know that as long as they keep moving they are safe.

In the canals by the roadside, fish are constantly in motion, monster gar and tiny brim. When we draw nearer to Miami the road is frequently lined with fishermen armed with long cane poles, though I, for one, could not be induced to try my luck there. The grass by the roadside is frequently alive with snakes of assorted sizes, and if the day is hot and bright there are hundreds of them about: rattlesnakes, moccasins, copperheads, and others of less venomous nature, slither out upon the pavement to sun themselves. If you stop your car and venture to the roadside you may find them all around you.

Though the Big Cypress is actually a part of the Everglades proper, few persons seem to think of it as such. The region, most generally intended when the Glades are mentioned, lies just to the east.

We come into it rather more abruptly than we did the ghostly wilderness of the Big Swamp; for the grizzled trees and the gnarled, stalagmitic knees thin rapidly, and as abruptly give way to a wide, level, grassy plain, stretching away, mile upon mile, to the south and east and north. The elevation of the roadway enables us to look out across this waving sea—the grass ranges anywhere from four to ten feet high—to the “hammocks”—land islands that dot the plain like rounded pincushions stuck with feathery palms and tropic verdure. Here and there a rift in the grass shows where a canal cuts its way through, or a tortuous blackwater creek threads its winding way from pool to pool. The road itself slips from hammock to hammock, affording alternate glimpses of waving gray-green grass in utterly immeasurable panorama, and lush, vine-choked, tropic jungle.

At Fakhahatchee—also called Weaver's Camp—there is still another crossroad. The north fork leads to Immokalee and the settlements

around Lake Okeechobee. The south fork leads to the thriving little city of Everglades, Barron Collier's capital, the county seat of Collier County, and a rendezvous for sports fishermen who would try their luck in the teeming waters surrounding the Ten Thousand Islands.

Beyond Fakahatchee the road continues its undeviating way eastward; past Ochopee where there is a small beginning to the agricultural development of the central Everglades; past Birdon, struggling for a foothold in the muck; past the Monroe filling stations, where a fork to the right takes you over the interesting Loop Drive; past more than a half a score of Seminole encampments with grotesquely lettered signs inviting the hurrying tourist to "Stop-Look-See! Osceola Billy's Indian Camp," or "Osceola Pete's," or "Osceola Charlie's." For eighty miles the way lies with scarcely a curve or a bend in its entire length, and with not a thing to slow your flying progress beyond an ungainly buzzard or two, slow in rising from the road, or an ancient bumbling model T, roaring along at twenty miles an hour, loaded to the gunnels with stolid, moon-faced Seminoles. Eighty miles in as many minutes—or even less—you can do if you wish, God and the highway patrol willing. And perhaps you will, even so, for this is one of the world's fastest traveled highways—and at the end of it lies Miami.

But for those who are not in too great a hurry to stop and see, there are two attractions along this highway that should not be missed. They are the Indians and the birds.

Indeed, one need scarcely stop to see the birds! They are all around you as you pass: singly, in pairs, in flocks of anywhere from six or eight to eighty or a hundred. If it is during the nesting season there will be literally thousands of them. Many of them will be familiar as summer residents of our own northern climes. But most will be comparatively new species—long-legged birds of the waterlogged land, lending an exotic air to the scene. A half a dozen varieties of herons, egrets, ibis, pelicans, ducks, buzzards make up the greater part of this ornithological display. Here a mature little blue heron picks his way daintily along the bank of the canal, one beady

eye cocked upon the muddy water's edge in sharp lookout for some scuttling morsel. There a small flock of white ibis crouch with wings half spread in the branches of a cypress grove, watching our speeding progress closely, ready to spring into labored flight at the first sign of notice on our part. Everywhere egrets and snowy herons, sometimes singly or in pairs beside the canal, or again in great flocks on the mud flats of some tidal pool, stand and watch our passage undisturbed, only the turning of their long necks indicating that they are even aware of our presence.

But stop the car for a moment to take a picture, or even just to stretch the legs, and all those birds—till now so evidently stolid—will rise in the air, clouding the sky, wheeling and crying their alarm, to mill a moment or two in apparent confusion, and then swoop away and settle out of sight in some distant clump of cypress or an opening in the rank, tall, saw grass.

I cannot pretend to be even an amateur ornithologist. Indeed, I could scarcely be called a great bird-lover. I can hardly tell one species from another, for to me birds are no more interesting than other creatures of creation. I do not destroy their nests. Neither do I build bird baths nor scatter bread crumbs upon the lawn. I do not go about throwing stones at them. But neither do I pay them great attention; so that as a bird lover I am scarcely qualified to speak. But as a layman, even as one of the dullest of laymen, I can say this: That no matter how far it may carry you out of your way, this drive across the Tamiami Trail from Naples to Miami or vice versa, for the birds alone, is well worth the time it takes. It is unique, probably in the world—certainly in America.

For the benefit of those who are deeply interested in the subject, the Florida Audubon Society at Sanford, Florida, maintains a number of wardens in the vicinity who take pleasure in showing genuinely interested visitors the rookeries. A card to the Society will bring full information.

It is unfortunate that as much cannot be said for the Indians one sees along the road. Certainly as they breeze along in their ancient cars, their wide skirts and multi-colored blouses and enormous hats

flapping in the wind they are picturesque enough. One sees them standing by the canalside, the men in their bright shirts and the women with their curious, high coiffures, fishing or embarking in one of their long dugout canoes, turning their black eyes in flat, brown faces, stolidly, to watch one pass, they present a striking appearance. Even a quick glimpse into one of their palm-thatched camps in passing is interesting. But he who would keep such illusions as he may have concerning the noble red man will not stop.

The truth of the matter is that Lo, the Poor Indian is not such a romantic creature as many would have us believe; and of all the unromantic Indians the poor Seminole is perhaps the least romantic. To begin with, though he retains the facial and physical characteristics of an Indian, he is in reality no true Indian, for the Negro strain has all but obliterated the native blood. He retains the old tribal customs, largely, I suspect, because he is too lazy to change. His mode of life was first adopted because it suited the country and the climate, and despite the White Man's steady encroachment upon his domain he has found that he can continue to live that life with as much comfort as he desires. Moreover, those who live along the Trail, at least,—and each year more and more of them come out of the fastnesses of the Big Swamp to squat by the roadside—have found that it has a definite cash value. Each winter thousands of tourists visit these thatched encampments, and each one of them leaves some silver behind.

That these camps are curious, I would be the last to deny. But I cry out in protest against those who would endeavor, in the fair name of publicity, to clothe them with romance. If curiosity prompts you to stop at one, you will have the privilege of paying from ten to twenty-five cents admission—as romantic as a circus sideshow! Once you are inside you will be assailed by such a romantic collection of odors as emanates from a zoo, a pigpen, and an open sewer combined. If you happen in at a meal time you may watch them at the old tribal custom of eating out of a common pot and slobbering their food down their shirt fronts. (Tribal custom also evidently taboos the cleaning of these same shirt fronts!) If you will wait around until they are finished you will see them scrape the remains of the meal from the

board to the ground, where they are left for the lean and mangy curs, with which the camp abounds, to wolf—if they will. When this ceremonial rite is finished and the women have gone back to their work, you will see them at that old romantic task of manufacturing dolls and other knick knacks for the tourist trade out of sticks and oddments of old rags on good old romantic sewing machines. If you unslung your camera to take pictures of all this romance, you will be besieged with screams for “monay, monay, monay!” Perhaps the camp has a large alligator in a pen. One of the braves will offer to wrestle it for a quarter. So will almost any black buck in Florida. And, let me tell you, as a sport, it is about as exciting to watch as a game of chess in which both players, exhausted by the ferocity of their play, have fallen asleep! As you leave you will no doubt be exhorted—romantically, of course,—to buy some of the native handicraft. Handicraft which, if I may say so, could be done as well by almost any ten year old in a moderately progressive school.

Such are the Seminoles who live along the Tamiami Trail. These, it must be admitted are but a few of all the Indians living in the Everglades; they represent, possibly, a third of the total. The balance live deep in the fastness of the Big Cypress Swamp, far from the rush and hurry of civilization. Their camps are inaccessible, and they do not welcome visitors, so that in so far as this book is concerned they are of but slight interest. However, the best authorities seem to be agreed that their mode of life differs but little from that of those we have already seen.

There is something ironically amusing in the fact that the Seminoles were not originally native to Florida, but rather, like most of the present day inhabitants, came there from elsewhere. Strictly speaking they were never a tribe. Their name is a Creek word meaning “renegade.”

The original inhabitants of Florida, so far as has been determined were of two tribes. Those living to the southward of Cape Canaveral were the Calusa. Those living northward of that point were the Timuquan. Long before the opening of the eighteenth century, however, these people were wiped out by plague, pestilence, and the

Spaniards, and the only traces of them that are left to us today are their burial and kitchen-midden mounds.

In 1715 the Yamassee Indian War broke out among the Indians of Georgia and Alabama. In the course of this war certain tribes of the Creek Nation were driven southward into Florida where they settled and presently became known as the Seminoles. Two distinct branches came into being, each having its own language, and known respectively in the order of their coming into the peninsula as the Mikosukee and the Muskogee. These two divisions remain today as separate and distinct as when they first arrived, each retaining its own tongue, so that it is difficult for a member of one branch to understand a member of the other when he speaks. The Muskogee occupy the region about Lake Okeechobee and eastwards; the Mikosukee keep to the Big Cypress Swamp and Miami areas.

These tribes at first occupied the northern portion of the state. As the white settlers continued to pour into the territory, however, they were forced back, step by step, into the funnel of the peninsula. For something more than a century, from their inception in 1730 until the middle of the last century, their history is a tale of constant warfare. And always their enemies were white men.

It was in the eighteen thirties that the United States finally precipitated the ultimate crisis. In 1835 it was proposed to remove the Seminoles westward to Oklahoma, to the Indian Territory, leaving Florida open for settlement. The Seminoles, however, appear to have had a few ideas of their own in the matter. They had sent delegates to Oklahoma to look over the land allotted them, and, discouraged by the reports which these delegates brought back, the majority of them refused to move. It is an ironical sidelight upon the ways of fate that many of the descendants of those who accepted the Government's terms and did go to Oklahoma have made their fortunes there in oil taken from the land which the Government gave them.

Be that as it may, the fact remains that by far the greater number of the Indians refused to leave Florida. A council was called, presided over by General Thomson. Now, whether Thomson rubbed the Indians the wrong way, or whether they came to the council

with a chip on their shoulder, is at this late date immaterial. The story has it that Thomson implied that unless the Indians complied with the Government's demands, the Government would withdraw its protection. With this ultimatum he laid the Government's treaty upon the table.

It was at that point that Osceola, who, though not even a minor chief, appeared even then to possess much influence among his people, stepped forward. Never, he cried, would the Seminoles accede to the Government's terms. And with that he drew his knife from his belt and with it pinned the treaty to the table. That, he swore, was the only treaty they would sign.

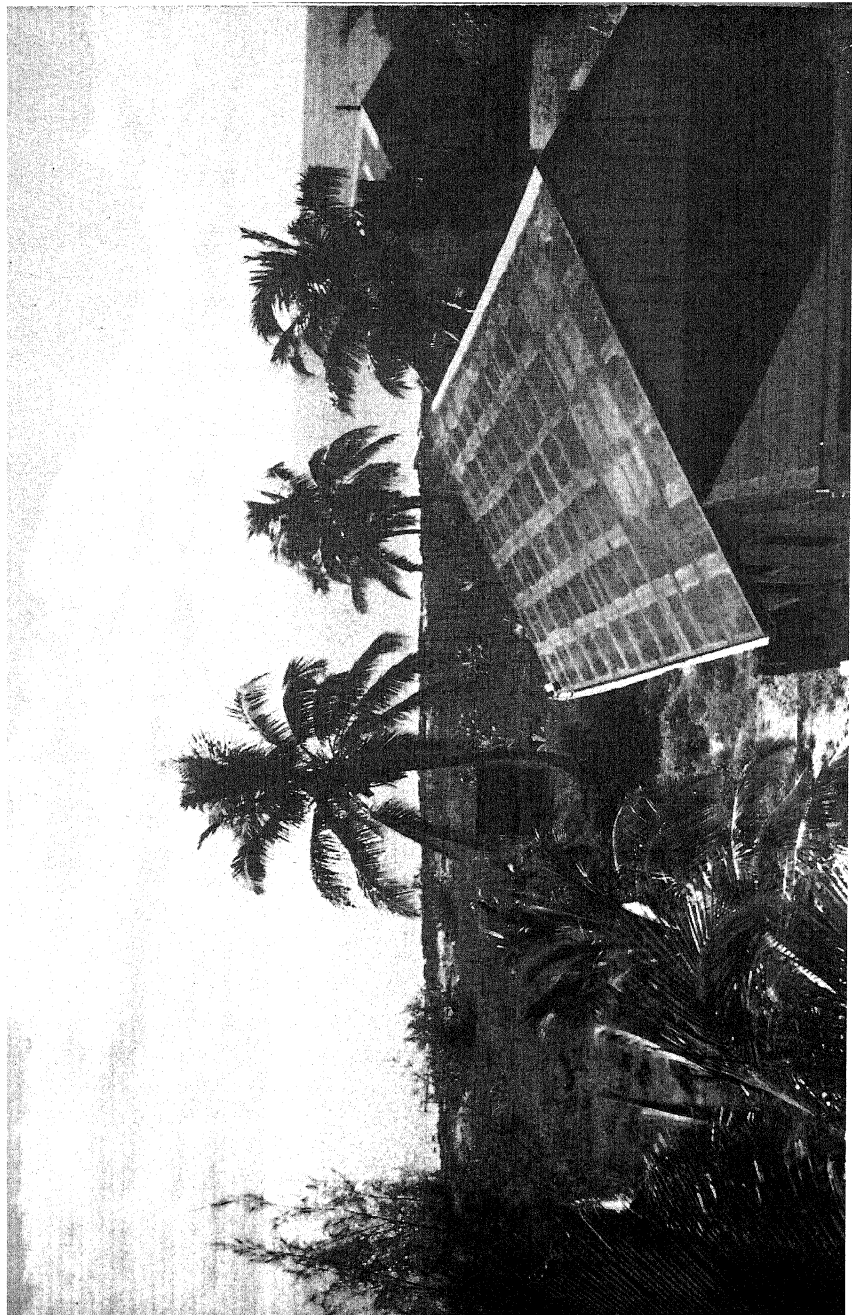
The fat was in the fire. Osceola and several others were seized at once and imprisoned. The council broke up in disorder, and the Indians dug up the hatchet and took to the warpath. Later in the same year, Major Dade and a column of one hundred and fifteen regular troops were ambushed by the savages, en route from Fort Brooke (Tampa) to Fort King (Ocala), and only two of the original column escaped to tell the tale of the now famous Dade Massacre. On the same day Osceola, since released and allowed to return to his people, murdered General Thomson and his aide in revenge for the injustice of his imprisonment.

This was more than the Government could stomach. War was formally declared on the Seminoles, and for nearly fifteen years it dragged on inconclusively. So long as Osceola maintained the leadership the Seminoles more than held their own. It was during this period that the Colee Massacre at Fort Lauderdale and the Perrine Massacre at Indian Key took place. In 1837 one of the few pitched battles of the war was fought at Lake Okeechobee. At its end the Americans, under command of Colonel Zachary Taylor who was later to become president, were in possession of the field, though their losses were greater than those of the Indians.

A few months later Osceola was seized while at Saint Augustine under a flag of truce, as handsome a piece of treachery as has ever been committed, and was imprisoned in Fort Marion. Later he was removed to Fort Moutrie in Charleston, where he died.



Such vistas as these will help make the Key West-Overseas Road
still more unique.



Little Pigeon Key is a green spot in the midst of bright, blue waters.

Following Osceola's capture the Indians fought on doggedly but with ineffectual leadership, until in the end they were forced by the increasingly overwhelming force of the whites, into the fastness of the Everglades, where they have remained ever since. There they were joined, in the late forties and fifties, by many a runaway slave. Later, after the conclusion of the War Between the States, their numbers were swelled by black fugitives. Of late years there has been a more peaceful and normal infiltration of Negro blood. But as far as the war is concerned, a state of hostilities still exists between the United States and the Seminole Indians; for no treaty of peace has ever been signed, or is ever likely to be.

Indians, egrets and alligators; swampland and saw grass; jungle hammock and jackpine flat; winding waterways and deep, dark, mysterious pools; those are the Everglades.

It may have occurred to some in the reading that it is unfortunate that all of this must bow to the civilizing effects of agriculture. Where will the little deer and the undersized black bear go when the cypress is cut away and the hammocks are cleared and planted to beans? What will become of all those millions of birds when all the swamps are drained and the saw grass burnt off? If the rate of development of the northern Glades is any indication, that day must presently come—for progress can be, at times, inexorably ruthless; and while we may have no quarrel with progress as such, yet many of us would like to see some parts our wilderness left untouched.

By a stroke of good fortune others have had the same idea. In 1929 Dr. David Fairchild and Mr. Ernest F. Coe organized the Tropical Everglades Park Association, as a first step in the fight to establish in South Florida a National Park, so that this last bit of true tropic wilderness might forever be preserved in its original state. The move met with immediate support. The Florida legislature passed a bill authorizing the purchase of the necessary lands and their donation to the Federal Government for park purposes. In Congress Senator Fletcher moved to authorize acceptance.

There is no need to go into the details of how the thing was done.

It is sufficient to say that in 1934 Congress finally put its stamp of approval upon the project, and the Everglades National Park became a definite reality, taking its place beside Yellowstone and Yosemite, Glacier and Grand Canyon, Shenandoah and Sequoia, and Mount Rainier and Crater Lake and Lassen Volcanic and Acadia and Great Smoky Mountains, and nearly a score of other parks, where something that is natural and unique is kept, for all time, unspoiled and unexploited for the people of the United States. The Grand Canyon is our most spectacular example of erosion. Mesa Verde preserves historic Indian ruins. Yellowstone has its geysers; Glacier its rivers of ice and majestic mountains. The Great Smoky Mountains National Park preserves in their natural state the highest summits in the East. And, in a like manner, the Everglades National Park will preserve for posterity the only true tropical region in continental United States.

Under the act of Congress by which the project was authorized none of the necessary land may be purchased out of the public money, "but such lands shall be secured by the United States only by public or private donation." This task of purchase and donation, as has already been indicated, was undertaken by the State of Florida, and, as it is not yet complete, the boundaries of the Park have not as yet been definitely settled upon. Roughly, however, the Park will extend from a point a few miles north of the Tamiami Trail, southward across Cape Sable's beaches, at the mainland's tip, to the vicinity of Tavernier on the Keys of Monroe County. From the West Coast, which it strikes a little east of Everglades City, it will extend eastward some fifty miles to a point just west of the town of Homestead. Southward of Homestead the proposed boundary swings eastward, following the Monroe County line to the Atlantic, thus covering the state from coast to coast at its southern tip.

As yet there has been almost no attempt to develop the area along recreational lines, as has been done with many of the other Parks. Indeed, it is highly probable that any development that is done will be of the simplest sort; merely the erection of shelter for the accommodation of visitors, and the provision of some means of access.

The whole keynote of the project is that the Park should be maintained in its original state of wilderness. In fact, Section Four of the Act of Congress providing for the establishment of the Park reads: "The said area or areas shall be permanently reserved as a wilderness, and no development of the project or plan for the entertainment of visitors shall be undertaken which will interfere with the preservation intact of the unique flora and fauna and the essential primitive natural conditions now prevailing in this area."

Because of this the Park is still among those most difficult to view adequately. In its entirety its two thousand square miles may be seen only from the air; and plane charter is notoriously expensive for such purposes. The mangrove inlets of the West Coast and the long sandy wastes of Cape Sable may be explored by boat either from Everglades or from Tavernier.

Nevertheless, and in spite of this, such of the Park as may be seen is perhaps best viewed from an automobile. In the north the Tamiami Trail transverses it entirely, entering at a point just east of Ochopee, and leaving it again, after some fifty miles, at a point some thirty miles west of Miami. In this region we see the vast saw grass prairies and the palm and jungle-covered hammocks with which the whole area is dotted.

This drive is perhaps the most familiar of all to the general public. A second highway which crosses a portion of the Park is the Miami-Key West Overseas road. This clips off the southeastern corner, and winds on down the Keys, affording glimpses of the mysterious mangrove swamps and islets that characterize the district. As this is to be our route southward in a later chapter, it will be treated in detail at that time.

But the portion of the Park that is, at present, most interesting as well as informative, is at the same time probably the least known. This is the tiny Royal Palm State Park, which lies a few miles southwest of Homestead, away from the beaten track, and well within the boundaries of the National Park.

The Royal Palm State Park is not, as its name implies, a state institution, but is the property of the Florida Federation of Women's

Clubs, and has been developed in its present state by them. In due time, when the larger project reaches the proper stage of development, Royal Palm will be turned over to the Government—or at least that is the understanding. In the meantime, however, it is most efficiently administered by its present owners with the assistance of the state.

In comparison with the whole it is but a tiny spot, covering a mere four thousand acres. The greater part of this is saw grass swamp and jungle-clad hammock, untouched and undeveloped save for the narrow road that winds through it. Squarely in the center, however, is "Paradise Key," a large hammock rising from the surrounding sea of grass like an oasis in the desert.

Here is the heart and soul of the little park. Here is situated the lodge, where overnight guests are accommodated at extremely reasonable rates, and where one of the best meals to be had in South Florida is served. There is a picnic ground for those who prefer to bring their own sandwiches. The hammock itself is covered with a network of paths and trails over which a courteous young Negro proudly shows the visitor, pointing out en route a hundred varieties of tropical shrubs and plants and trees and flowers.

Because it is typical of Everglades hammocks this is important. Every effort has been made to keep it in its natural state, while, at the same time, making it accessible to visitors. As we wander through the winding pathways, the live oaks and mahogany trees and cabbage palms, with here and there a stately royal palm, form a leafy cover through which the warm bright rays of the sun slant down, casting a pattern of sunlight and shadow all around. Vines and creepers trail from every branch. Every now and again a strangler fig winds itself with deadly grip about some sturdy live oak. Everywhere strange air plants nestle in the forks of trees. Exotic shrubs line the path. And all of this is natural. Not one single plant has been set out by the hand of man. If it is in the proper season our guide will point out to us an orchid in bloom. But whether the orchids bloom or no, the fragrance of flowers and spicy shrubs pervades the entire Park. A hundred and one varieties of birds flutter

overhead, while below bright butterflies flit from sunlight to shadow and back again before us.

If the traveler be weary, this is a restful place to stop. But even if he is in a hurry he should plan a stop here, for in the Royal Palm State Park, as it is today, he will obtain some slight foretaste of what, under government auspices, the entire area of the Everglades National Park may some day become.

DOWN TO THE SEA IN CARS

Chapter IV

HAVING reached Miami—and by the way, the accepted pronunciation of the word, among those who live there, is “My-am-uh,” please—both from the East Coast and the West, one might think that we were come at last into the heart of tropical United States; that, in so far as Florida might be concerned, at least we had reached our journey’s end. The truth of the matter is we have but reached the gateway. Thus far, what we have seen to the north and west has been Florida, fascinating, intriguing, to be sure, but at the same time, with the exception of the Everglades and the Royal Palm Park, possessed of a certain indefinable familiarity that leads us to accept it with a modicum of wonder.

But south and westward of Miami lies a new world—a world that is different from anything we have yet seen. It is a tropical world: there is no longer any question about that. It is a world in which the sea grape and mangrove and wild pawpaw and coconut flourish, and where even the spindly Caribbean pine is looked upon as something of an oddity. It is a world of dazzling sunlight, of close blue skies, of green islets, white-fringed, set in bright seas whose constantly changing color runs the gamut from pale chalky green through the blue of robins’ eggs to deep violet and ultramarine. It is a world reached by a highway that goes, literally, to sea. And at the end of the highway lies a city that is without a counterpart anywhere.

The Florida Keys are a string of coral islets, ranging in size from mere dots on the sea, a half an acre or less of tangled mangrove growth, to really sizeable islands of several square miles in area, and

stretching in a more or less unbroken chain for some two hundred miles. Starting just below Miami, they parallel the coast to a point where it turns abruptly westward at the southernmost tip of the peninsula. From there they step seaward, swinging in a long curve southwestward. As far as Key West they cling fairly closely together. But beyond they thin out rapidly, appearing above the surface in groups, to end abruptly, some sixty miles west of Key West, in the Dry Tortugas. On the southern side they are separated from the Gulf Stream, racing through the Florida Strait at the rate of five knots an hour, and the buffeting seas by the treacherous Florida Reef. On the north they are washed by the Gulf of Mexico and the shoal waters of Florida Bay. Their base is of coral formation, and it is believed that at one time they were a part of a land link between the mainland of the North American Continent and the peninsula of Yucatan. Be that as it may, their land area is constantly increasing, rather than decreasing, due to the action of the busy mangrove. This hardy and industrious plant scatters its seed upon the water. These lodge on the tidal flats at low tide and take root, sending up a single shoot. As these grow taller and stronger they send down other roots from the main trunk, and later from the branches, so that the older the plant grows the more it resembles a tree on stilts. That action of the tides brings sand and seaweed, floating grasses, wreckage, and all manner of debris to lodge among the tangled roots; and this rots, settles, and gradually forms solid ground. In this way new land is constantly forming, not only in the Keys, but all around the southern and western edge of the Everglades, where the mangroves flourish.

At some dim distant day, perhaps, the whole of Florida Bay will be solid ground, and it will be possible to walk dry shod across its former expanse from Everglades to Key West. For the present, however, he who would reach this southernmost city in the United States must go to sea by way of the recently completed Miami-Key West Overseas Highway. And when I say "go to sea by the highway," I mean that literally, for often the keys which the road traverses are little more than strips of causeway built up between the waters of the Gulf on the one hand and those of the Straits upon the other. Bridges

between keys a mile or two in length are not uncommon, and there is one stretch of more than seven miles entirely over water.

When Henry Flagler had reached Miami, many thought his railroad building activities would end. Indeed, it was thought that there was no place else for him to go. Flagler, however, was not one to stop until the end had been reached, and to him, what others called the end, was only the beginning. When he announced his intention of pushing his railroad down over the Keys to Key West, he was considered by more than a few to be just a little bit "touched." "Flagler's Folly," they called it, and wagged their heads. It would never be done, they said. It was impossible.

But it was not impossible. It took seven years and an outlay of fifty million dollars. It cost a total of two hundred lives. But it was done, and in 1912 Flagler himself brought the first train into Key West. In the next year, having reached the peak of his ambition, and accomplished more than any other man for Florida, he died.

Naturally the citizens of Key West were jubilant at the completion of the work. They saw their city becoming an important terminal and transshipping point. "The work is done!" cried Jefferson B. Browne in his history, *Key West, the Old and the New*, written in 1912. "Let it speak for itself, now and forever!"

How puny are the hopes of man! Forever! Flagler's Folly remained in successful operation for exactly twenty-three years. Then, on Labor Day 1935, the historic Labor Day hurricane swept across the Keys, bringing with it a wall of water that washed out fill and track, twisting the heavy rails like so much wire, picking up ties and equipment like so many matchsticks and scattering them across the Bay of Florida.

There were other consequences, as we shall see, but as far as the overseas railway was concerned it was the end. The Florida East Coast, not too strong financially at that moment anyway, decided that the road could not be rebuilt. For several weeks Key West was cut off from communication with the outside world save by boat. Then gradually the auto highway, which had been extended to Matecumbe Key, was cleared and repaired. The ferries which had formerly plied

between Matecumbe and No Name Key, were overhauled and augmented with new boats. Work which had been going forward on the highway at the time of the hurricane was temporarily suspended. But in 1936 the Federal Government took over the railroad's right of way and appropriated fifty-seven million dollars for its conversion, from Matecumbe to Big Pine Key, into an automobile highway. The heavy concrete trestles, which had stood unharmed by the storm, were used to bridge the gaps between the Keys. The rails were lifted and the roadbed widened by means of steel girders and huge concrete slabs laid crosswise and braced with heavy steel angle irons to the trestle itself. The rails themselves were welded together into a continuous length, and were attached to reinforced concrete posts on either side of the highway to serve as guardrails. At Moser Channel the swing bridge, required to be retained there by the War department, was split down the center and widened by means of steel girders inserted between the two halves and welded. The Bahia Honda span, nearly a mile long, was too long for such tactics, and for a time it was thought that at this one spot one way traffic would have to be maintained. Someone, however, hit upon a brilliant scheme. The roadway was filled and graded up, as for an overpass, until it was level with the top of the bridge superstructure. Then again the crosswise steel girders and concrete were laid, high above the water, across the top of the bridge braces, making this the highest point on the highway—some sixty feet above the sea.

Today, the new road stands complete—a marvel of highway engineering, connecting Key West, Florida and Calais, Maine in one unbroken ribbon of roadway. Whether or not the new road will withstand the buffeting of a tropical hurricane remains to be seen. But when the test storm comes, it will need to be stronger than any yet recorded.

Leaving Miami, our road turns west on S.E. First Street, at the southern end of Biscayne Boulevard, and then south on Second Avenue. Across the Miami River it follows Brickell Avenue to South Miami. As recently as January 1938 this road was numbered State

Route 4. It is my understanding, however, that with the final completion of the Overseas Highway, it is to be added to the main system of U.S. Route 1. In any event it is well marked.

Below South Miami we pass through the fertile Redlands district, a region of intensive truck farming, to Homestead. A mile or two below Homestead a sign at a crossroads proudly announces that we are now in Florida City. Here the road to Royal Palm State Park bears right, marked by a sign. Our own road continues straight south.

Thus far there has been little out of the ordinary by the way. The Redlands district resembles closely the country to the northward of Miami. Below Florida City, however, there is a distinct change, for beyond that point we enter the low-lying, gray marl country of the Glades. Not so long ago this was tidal swamp. Even today it seems but little more. The level of the land lies but a few feet above the surface of the canals that drain it. Its surface is dotted with scattered clumps of cypress and mangrove. Even saw grass does not seem to thrive. But strange as it may seem, for certain crops, this land is among the best in the state.

Straight through the heart of this region the road cuts, riding the high backbone of a causeway now. As we speed toward the tip of the peninsula the countryside seems to sink lower and lower. The gaunt cypress thickens, but seems unable to attain a height above eight feet. The drainage canals become more or less ineffectual. Every now and again the water spills out over their low banks, and lies in dark stagnant pools among the swampland growth. The mangroves grow more and more compact, until in the end they seem to choke out all other growth. In reality they are probably the only thing that will grow here, for now, if the tide be high, we can see it swirling about their roots. Were our progress less rapid it would become monotonous, but there is nothing here to slow us down. Even the slowest drivers will average forty-five and fifty miles an hour over this stretch.

But we are soon over it. We burst through a clump of mangrove to find ourselves all at once confronted by the dazzling, blue-green waters of Card Sound. For a short distance we skirt the bay in a wide

curve. Then the causeway goes to sea, leaping out into the pass that separates Card from Barnes Sound. Follows a long wooden bridge, both rails usually lined with fishermen, a dip and a winding road, curving through the clustering mangroves with here and there a tantalizing vista of bright blue water seen through a break in the rank growth; two more short bridges carry us over tidal inlets, their waters blackened by the roots of the mangroves, and at last we are in the Keys.

Key Largo is the first and largest. For twenty miles it lies in one unbroken stretch, so that for all we can tell we might yet be on the mainland. We cannot see the ocean for the jungle of sub-tropic growth that lines the road on either hand. But once Key Largo drops behind, the others follow in swift succession, affording an ever changing panorama of bright skies and brighter seas, dotted with islets fringed with palms and mangrove, and showing here and there occasional patches of dazzling white sand beach.

Tavernier follows close on Key Largo, followed by Plantation Key, Windy Key, Upper and Lower Matecumbe Keys, Jewfish Key, Long Key, Grassy, Key Vaca, little Pigeon Key huddling under the high stepping span of the trestle, Moser Channel with its swing span, Bahia Honda, with its high-backed bridge, No Name Key, Big Pine Key, Ramrod Key, Saddlebunches, Geiger Key, Boca Chica, Stock Island, and ultimately Key West. There are others, big and little scattered all along the chain, but to name them all would fill a chapter in itself.

What tales might these keys tell if they could but speak—tales of piracy and bloodshed, tales of wrecks and bootleggers, tales of high adventure and stark tragedy. Many of them are lost to us now, dead with the men who might have told them. But others survive in legends up and down the Keys. Some of them are in the records.

That the Indians fought among themselves for the possession of these islands is probable, though not definitely established. A few Indian remains have been discovered; but just what people lived here remains a mystery. It is generally believed that the savages of the mainland, enraged at the islanders' invasion of their hunting grounds in the Everglades, embarked upon a campaign of extermination, driv-

ing them from key to key until they made a last stand at Key West. Here the islanders and the mainlanders fought a pitched battle in which the former were overwhelmingly defeated. A few of them are said to have escaped to Cuba in canoes, but most of them are supposed to have been slaughtered on the spot. Years afterwards, when the whites first came to the island, they found it strewn with the bones of the ill-fated savages. Because of this they called it Cayo Hueso, or Bone Key, a name which, if the story be true, was later corrupted by the English—with characteristic facility—to Key West.

That the Indians were active here as late as 1838 is a matter of record, for in that year they fell upon the little colony of whites on Indian Key, seen lying a mile or two off the lower tip of Lower Matecumbe Key, and slaughtered all on whom they were able to lay their hands. A few of the little band escaped by hiding in cisterns, standing in water up to their chins for five and six hours, while in some cases their houses were burned over their heads. The ruins of the settlement remain to this day, for any to see who will take the trouble to row out to the island. Among those slain was Dr. Henry Perrine, who had received from Congress the grant of a township on Biscayne Bay, below Miami, which today bears his name. It was his purpose to establish a colony there and conduct a series of experiments in the growing of various species of tropical and sub-tropical plants, which he believed would thrive in South Florida's frost-free climate. He had come prepared to plant his seeds, but due to the unsettled conditions on the mainland he deemed it wiser to settle on Indian Key temporarily, until the Indian hostilities should cease. While he was waiting he did some extensive planting on nearby Matecumbe and Lignum Vitae Keys. Perrine did not live to see the results of his planting, but some specimens of West Indian mahogany, as well as several other species not native to these islands, may still be found on Matecumbe and Lignum Vitae, mute monuments to the soundness of the good doctor's theories.

But the activities of the Indians play but a small part in the story of the Keys. Neither do the Spaniards figure importantly in it, although the Florida Straits were the passage by which their plate ships

from Mexico found their way to the Atlantic and Cadiz. One such fleet was wrecked during a hurricane on Carysfort Reef, just off the eastern end of Key Largo, in 1715. The treasure, however, has long since been recovered.

Later these waters were the haunts of the "Brethren of the Coast"—pirates to you. So bad did the depredations of these scoundrels become that in 1822 Commodore Porter was ordered to these waters to put an end to their activities. Porter made his headquarters at Key West. The whole of the West Indian squadron was at his disposal, but nevertheless for two years the pirates, with their shallow draft sloops, eluded his heavier frigates in the narrow tortuous channels of the Keys. At length, however, Porter saw the ridiculousness of such a chase, and determined on his own initiative to put an end to it. Accordingly he sent the deep draft frigates back to their customary stations, retaining, of the original squadron, only the *Peacock*, the *John Adams*, the *Hornet*, the *Spark*, the *Grampus* and the *Shark*. At the same time he had built a fleet of five twenty-oared barges of the type known as "gundelos," flat-bottomed and with a very shallow draft. To this complement he added a number of small, light-draft schooners, making a total of twenty-one craft available for his purpose. In addition he procured an antiquated steam ferry boat, retired from the New York-Hoboken service—this was in 1824, remember—for towing purposes. Incidentally this is the first recorded use of a steam vessel in the United States Navy.

Porter used the *Sea Gull*, as the converted ferry boat was called, to tow his barges up and down the line of the Keys. When a pirate craft was sighted pursuit was immediately ordered. The brethren, according to their custom, would run at once to the safety of the shallow channels. This time, however, the game was up. Porter filled his gundelos with men and arms and went in chase.

Within the year he had rid the Keys of this pest. The buccaneers took refuge in Cuba. Without orders and on his own Porter chased them into the Port of Matanzas. Again they fled, this time to the Isle of Pines, off the south coast of Cuba. Porter, now thoroughly aroused, again sailed into the territorial waters of His Most Catholic

Majesty and drove them thither. A third time they went to ground at the Port of Fajardo, at the eastern tip of the Island of Puerto Rico. Again Porter went in pursuit, landing, this time, a shore party which did a thorough job of extermination.

For an American armed force to enter Spanish waters was bad enough, but for a landing force to come ashore and shoot thieves who were virtually under Spanish protection, was more than the Dons could stomach. A vigorous complaint was lodged in Washington, with the result that a whitewash court-martial reprimanded Porter and sentenced him to six months suspension from duty. Aroused at the injustice of the move, Porter resigned and entered the service of Mexico. Later he served as Admiral of the Turkish navy. Somewhat belatedly the United States Government recognized the injustice of their action and as a measure of atonement, appointed him consul at Constantinople, where he died in 1843.

Following the extermination of the pirates, piracy in a new form cropped up; and by comparison with the new regime the Brethren of the Coast were a cleancut crowd. In Key West they will deny to this day that there was anything in the least *sub rosa* in the activities of the wreckers. The wrecking captains, they will tell you, were an honest crew. They simply kept their vessels in readiness; and when an act of God put some unfortunate ship upon the reef, they ventured forth to help her off if they could, or if they could not, to rescue her people and save what they might of her cargo. The law says a salvor may take from five to ninety per cent of the value of a salvaged vessel and cargo. Furthermore, a salvage lien takes precedence over all others. It was a nice racket. No doubt there were, in Key West, honest men engaged in it—men who took only such wrecks as the Lord saw fit to send their way. But that there were others who loaned the Lord a helping hand, is beyond the shadow of a doubt.

There is current a story of one such who erected two poles on Big Pine Key a hundred yards or more apart. Between these poles, on pulleys, he rigged lines. At night he would hang a lantern upon each of these lines in such a way that, seen from seaward they resembled the masthead lines of a ship. Then, by means of the pulleys

he would move the lights slowly along, between the poles, thus duplicating the progress of a ship. Vessels at sea, seeing these lights moving well inside their position, assumed that they were those of another ship. They also assumed that they had plenty of sea room. Also, if they were south bound, they would conclude that they were well out in the Gulf Stream, bucking the current, and in order to get the full advantage of the dead water lying along the reef, would bear inshore. Many a ship was lured on to the rocks in this way, and our hero, the villain of the piece, would then dash gallantly to the rescue! There being no light upon the Florida Reef from Carysfort to Key West, it is hardly surprising that unscrupulous wrecking masters lured many a ship to its doom by such methods. Nor is it any more surprising that the Florida Reef gained by it a particularly foul name.

After the installation of lights at Sombrero, Alligator, American Shoals, Key West, Sand Key, Rebecca Shoal, and the Dry Tortugas, there was some measure of safety for the careful mariner. But it also brought improved methods of wrecking. As late as 1910 a wrecker was caught on one of the nearer Keys to Key West, exposing a red lantern in a barrel mounted on a pole, simulating Key West's dangerous "red sector." Now every skipper knows that the Red Sector is to be avoided. Consequently, in the effort to avoid the supposed danger signalled by the lantern in a barrel, more than one ship went aground.

Wrecking, however, gave way to filibustering. More than a dozen Cuban uprisings were outfitted and embarked in these waters while the authorities winked at the trade under the pretext of insufficient evidence. As an instance on May 31, 1897 the tug *Dauntless* was taken in the act of loading arms and munitions off Jupiter Inlet by the U.S.S. *Marblehead*. The arms and powder were dumped before the sailors from the *Marblehead* were able to get aboard. Rubber ponchos, shelter tents, and a seal of the Republic of Cuba—which at that time, remember, existed only in the minds of rebels—were found aboard. The tug was taken to Key West, where she was released by the United States Commissioner "for want of sufficient evidence to convict."

After the close of the Spanish War the Keys reverted to their old habits of wrecking for a time. But in 1919 prohibition ushered in a new era. Bootleggers were probably more active in these waters than anywhere else upon the coast. Cuba was but a short run across the straits; and a high speed, shallow draft boat had an excellent chance of dodging the coast guard in the tangled maze of mangrove inlets that threaded the Keys. Many and many a merry chase were the revenuers led before repeal put an end to the business. Today life on the Keys is comparatively dull. A small amount of smuggling, mostly of aliens, still goes on. But the coast guard net is, these days, stretched so fine that it is difficult for any but the most skillful to slip through.

No book that deals with Florida could be complete without some discussion of tropical hurricanes, and some attempt to lay the hurricane ghost. Hurricanes have long been a bugbear with which to frighten prospective travelers to southern Florida in general, and travelers to Key West and the Keys in particular. Let one but mention the fact that he is on his way to America's southernmost city, and eyes grow wide and incredulous. "My!" one of the audience shakes her head and says, "I'd be afraid to go there. Aren't you afraid of hurricanes?"

Such questions make one think of the Englishman who would not venture across the Atlantic for fear of being scalped by red Indians. The only answer is, of course, emphatically "No!"—with reservations.

The truth is easily explained and readily understood. Hurricanes are tropical disturbances of great intensity originating in the South Atlantic, between Africa and the West Indies, or in the Northern Caribbean, and traveling in a general westerly or northwesterly direction which can generally be fairly accurately forecast. In form they are monster whirlwinds, sometimes covering a circle many miles in diameter, spinning at a terrific rate of speed, and advancing slowly, as a spinning top advances along a level floor. The speed with which they move forward may be anywhere from five to twenty miles per hour, and sometimes even faster, though it is the slower ones that do the most damage. Their approach is always heralded by a sharp drop

in the barometer, so that by means of comparative readings taken over a given area it is often possible for the Weather Bureau to forecast accurately the course of the storm and issue warnings, frequently as much as twenty-four hours in advance of its arrival. A house standing in the direct path of one of these storms receives the wind, at first gustily and then with rising, steady force on the left (assuming that it faces in the direction from which the storm is coming). For a period of several hours the wind continues to increase in force, tearing up anything that has not been securely fastened down, battering at poor, flimsy construction, weakening it steadily, shaking even solidly built houses until it seems they must be torn from their foundations. Then, all at once, the wind ceases. Flat calm reigns. The sun may even shine. Now those who are wise resist the impulse to fling open doors and windows—hitherto battened tight against the fury of the wind. They do not rush outside to enjoy the moment's peace, for they know that this is but an interlude, and that the worst is yet to come. This is the heart of the storm, the core about which the winds revolve. It is the origin of the expression "dead center." It may last for a few moments, or it may continue for several hours, depending upon the area which the storm covers. But when it ends, the wind begins again, as abruptly as it left off, and with redoubled fury, blowing this time from the opposite side.

This is the danger point at which the worst of the wind's damage is done. Innocents, unwarned of the storm's character and unaware that the period of calm was but a lull, are apt to be caught out. Storm-weakened structures, first loosened by the steady buffeting from the left, give way before the sudden terrific blast coming from the opposite direction. Persons caught out at such a time are lucky if they are not crushed or impaled by flying timbers. From this point onward the fury of the storm abates, almost imperceptibly at first, and then more rapidly until it blows itself out and becomes no more than an ordinary gale.

A pretty awesome business, you might say; and you would be quite right in so saying, but nature and human ingenuity have combined to rob the hurricane of much of its terrors. Nature contributes

by giving these tropical storms a very definite season. There is an old saw in the West Indies, concerning hurricanes, which runs:

*June, too soon,
July, stand by,
August, come it must,
September, remember,
October, all over.*

In general, this has been found to be a pretty accurate summing up of the hurricane season in Florida with the exception of an occasional blow in November. In the period in which the Weather Bureau has maintained records—a matter of some fifty years—there have been some fifty-six major and minor hurricanes in Florida. Of these only eight are classed as great storms. Of the fifty-six, thirty-six occurred in September and October, seventeen occurred in June, July, and August, and three occurred in November.

So much for nature's part in defeating the hurricane's disastrous ends. Man's ingenuity has gone further towards meeting the storm upon its own grounds. By the invention of scientific instruments he has enabled himself to foresee the storm's approach. By sound construction methods he has been enabled to build houses which will withstand the fury of the blast. Hurricane shutters and doors enable him to keep out the wind. Flimsy buildings, poorly or cheaply constructed, will not stand against a hurricane's force. But in a properly-constructed house one may lock himself inside and live securely and in safety until the worst is past. There are standing today in Key West many wooden houses which have stood securely and with but slight damage through every hurricane which has visited that city since 1846, the first of severe intensity recorded on the island.

A curious fact about these storms, especially noted in flat countries such as Florida, is that it is the water which such a storm piles up before it that is responsible for more damage than the wind. Yet even here man has made great strides towards defeating the evil purpose of the storm in various ways—as by the construction of dykes

in the Lake Okeechobee district, the scene of the 1928 hurricane disaster.

So it would seem that with proper exercise of caution the hurricane's dangers might be set at naught. But men are not always as careful as they might be. Sometimes they have not the opportunity. More often someone is reckless. Disasters continue despite warnings and experience. And unfortunately hindsight continues to be more common than foresight.

It was just such a tropical storm which in 1565 drove Ribault's fleet ashore somewhere in the vicinity of Cape Canaveral. It was a hurricane in 1715 which drove the Spanish treasure fleet, already mentioned, upon Carysfort Reef at the eastern end of Key Largo. It was another in 1919 which wrecked the Spanish liner *Nalbanera* on the shoals near Rebecca Light at a cost of nearly five hundred lives. Again, it was a hurricane in 1926 which hit Miami and put an end to the great boom. Another in 1928 played a similar trick on Palm Beach and was responsible for the Everglades disaster. There were others in-between, and there were others after, but one of the worst, if not the worst ever recorded, struck at Matecumbe Key on Labor Day, 1935, ripped out the Florida East Coast's overseas railway, and wiped out three veterans' camps in one of the country's major disasters. Even today, despite the cleanup work that has removed much of the debris it is possible to see, as we spin southwestward from Tavernier over Plantation, Windly, and Upper and Lower Matecumbe Keys to Craig, evidences of the fury of that storm.

In the late summer and early fall of the year 1934 a group of unemployed veterans staged what was at that time known as the "second bonus march" on Washington. The first bonus march and its upshot will be recalled by everyone. The second was rather more quietly and sensibly handled. The men were promised that with their cooperation everything possible would be done for them, and as a result of this promise a number of camps were established, exclusively for veterans and similar in character to the camps of the Civilian Conservation Corps.

It was early in 1935 that several of these camps were established,

under the local direction of the Florida Emergency Relief Administration, upon the Florida Keys for the purpose of starting construction of the Key West Overseas Highway. The men were lodged in well-built camps, somewhat similar to those occupied at present by the C. C. C. There is no doubt but that the buildings were sufficient to withstand any ordinary gale. The climate was not unbearable. In fact, along the keys, the heat in summer is rarely as oppressive as it frequently is at points further north upon the coast. The fare was, if no better, certainly no worse than in similar camps. The hours of work were easy.

Such was the situation on the Keys at the end of August 1935. At that time there were enrolled in the camps some six hundred and ninety-four men, though exactly how many of these were in the camps at the time the storm struck has never been definitely established.

The late summer and early fall of 1935 had its full share of stormy weather in the Atlantic, but on Saturday morning, August 31, the weather reports for Florida, as published in the newspapers read simply, "local showers Saturday and Sunday." The first warning of anything amiss came early Saturday afternoon when the Weather Bureau reported a hurricane making up in the Bahamas. But that was still too far distant for any apprehension to be felt upon the keys. By Sunday morning, however, the storm had assumed a definitely westward course, and the Weather Bureau's first warning read: "Probably winds hurricane force small area near center. Will pass through Florida Straits late tonight or Monday morning. Caution advised vessels in path. Storm warnings Fort Pierce to Fort Myers." This was something more definite, but still no apprehension was felt either in Miami or at Matecumbe.

All Sunday night and Monday morning the storm continued westward. Havana prepared to receive it. Key Westers dared to hope that it might pass to southward. But early Monday afternoon hurricane warnings were ordered from Key Largo to Key West. The latter city began feverish preparations to receive the blow. Every

door and window was boarded. Everything movable was made secure.

At exactly what point and at what time the storm changed its course is uncertain. The first warning from the Weather Bureau that this had occurred came at four-thirty Monday afternoon. Unfortunately, the warning of the hurricane came too late. One other warning was issued before the storm struck the Keys. This came at seven o'clock and read: "Hurricane warnings ordered 7:00 P. M. north of Key Largo to West Palm Beach. Tropical disturbance hurricane intensity APPROACHING MATECUMBE KEY. Will cause winds of about hurricane force over EXTREME SOUTHERN FLORIDA late tonight or early Tuesday morning."

The Weather Bureau was a little behind itself. The blow struck at Matecumbe at approximately eight o'clock that evening. On Thursday the nation at large was informed of the awful disaster in the headlines:

HURRICANE TOLL EXCEEDS 200.

VETERANS LEAD FATALITIES.

It had been a holiday week-end at the camp. Some people were worried about the state of the weather, but until Sunday afternoon there was no one in the camp with sufficient authority to order the necessary train for transporting the veterans from the doubtful area. When, at length, such an authority arrived, other individuals, higher up, upon the mainland could not be located to confirm the order. By the time the necessary arrangements were made, the railroad was encountering some difficulty in finding a crew to run the train which was to remove the men. Finally the train started, but it was further delayed when the locomotive was fouled by a loose cable blown from a derrick at the quarry below Camp 1. By this time the wind was blowing a full gale, and there was no longer any question of where the storm was going to pass. After some time the cable was disentangled and the train proceeded slowly because of the heightening wind and storm to Islamorada, midway along Upper Matecumbe Key.

About this time the water began to rise—and here again is proof that in such storms it is water rather than wind which is the source of danger. The water with the enormous pressure of the wind behind it, piled up against the railroad embankment as if it were a dam. When the embankment gave way, as inevitably it must, the terrific rush of water carried everything before it.

At the camps there was utter bewilderment, consternation, confusion among the men who remained. When the buildings began to give way, the men in them sought safety outside. Some of them took to the low trees. Some of them climbed the embankment to the railroad and lay down flat, clinging to the rails. A poor refuge it proved! The wind in its fury carried them away.

Some of the men took refuge in a barge, and rode out the storm in its belly. These survived.

Those who recall the tragedy will remember that relief forces were moved into the area as rapidly as possible. When the relief work was complete and a final count taken it was found that some four hundred and fifty had perished, veterans and civilians included.

U. S. FARTHEST SOUTH

Chapter V

As we turn our backs upon Matecumbe's scene of ghastly memory we come almost at once upon the first long span of the newly-completed overseas road, the graceful Jewfish Key Bridge.

Hitherto, with the exception of a short space between Upper and Lower Matecumbe, we have had but little more than brief glimpses of the sea. Now, however, it opens out on either hand, the waters of the Atlantic rolling in upon our left, to pass beneath our wheels and mingle on our right with those of the Gulf.

And such a sea it is: constant, yet ever changing! Near at hand it may show pale and chalky, yet blue as a robin's egg, where the wind and tide sweep over a submerged bar of white marl sand. A little farther away, where it runs deeper, it is a clear, translucent blue, its shades varying as the bottom changes. Often the shades will shift before our eyes as the shadow of a cloud slips silently across it or a gust of gentle wind whips its surface into tiny sparkling wavelets. In the distance, along the horizon, a long, low-hulled tanker, outside the line of jagged reefs, steams doggedly westward upon a surface of deepest ultramarine. Overhead a dazzling sun shines brightly down out of a tropic sky that seems almost close enough to touch, if one but had something to climb up on. And in contrast to all the blue brilliancy of sea and sky the little keys and islets lie like bright green pincushions, fringed about with white ribbons of sandy beach.

Land and water are nearly evenly divided now, for we spin from key to key with startling rapidity. Long Key, once the site of an exclusive fishing club destroyed in the Labor Day hurricane of 1935,

drops behind. Key Vacas, as recently as a year ago the end of the first leg of the ferry jump, looms ahead. Last year Key Vacas lay four tedious hours by antiquated ferry from Matecumbe. Now we reach it and are past it in a half an hour or less. Twelve miles farther along, Marathon, formerly the reëmbarkation point for the ferries, is now the starting point for the longest over water jump. Here for seven miles the concrete ribbon rides high above the water upon the old railroad trestling. Only once in this stretch is dry land underneath—at tiny Pigeon Key, which might slip beneath unnoticed but for the waving tops of the coconut palms which come up level with the roadway. Following the long span come Duck Key, Bahia Honda, with its high span, the West Summerlands, Big Pine, and the end of new construction. From here on we are on the old road. Torch Key follows Big Pine, and is in turn followed by Ramrod, with its post office and filling station, then Summerland, then Cudjoe, then Sugarloaf, on which is located the famous Pirate's Cove fishing camp. Sugarloaf is followed by the Saddlebunches, and these are succeeded by Bird Key, Geiger Key, Boca Chica Key and Stock Island. We begin to see signs of life. At Boca Chica bridge is another fishing camp—Pinder's. A row of signs ornaments the highway beyond in rather dubious fashion. We pass a filling station and a dairy sign. Then we swing around a sharp turn and come quickly out upon a short, wide, high-backed concrete bridge. What's this? Immediately upon our left a pair of gigantic, spraddle-legged radio towers reach skyward. We saw them from the bend at the end of Boca Chica bridge, but could not quite believe our eyes.

Here they are, though, sure enough. And at the end of the short bridge there is a sign, "Welcome to Key West."

Key West is the southernmost city in the United States. It lies in the latitude $24^{\circ} 33'$ north and longitude $81^{\circ} 48'$ west. More familiarly, it lies at the tip of the chain of keys extending west southwest from the southern end of the Florida peninsula, almost due south of Cleveland, Ohio, 90 miles from Havana, and 120 miles by air line southwest of Miami. Strictly speaking it just misses being a tropical

city, for it lies but 45 miles north of the Tropic of Cancer. That it is far enough south to be warm the year round, however, is evidenced by the fact that it is 755 miles farther south than Los Angeles, California, and 375 miles farther south than Cairo, Egypt. It is almost on a line with Benares, India, and Canton, China.

I have long suspected that in extremely hot weather the Weather Bureau placed their instruments in close proximity to a long cool drink and an electric fan. Conversely, when a cold snap sweeps the country, it would not surprise me to learn that they wrapped the thermometer in flannel and hung it behind the kitchen stove. Certainly the official records rarely reflect actual conditions as felt by the man in the street. According to the official figures, Key West's annual temperature average is 77° . The official variation between summer and winter is some $12\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$, making the winter average about 72° and the summer average about 85° .

But these figures, it must be remembered, are the average taken over a long period. The temperature in Key West, in winter, can and does drop below 72° , though only at extremely rare intervals does it go lower than 60° . Key West's sixty, however, is the equivalent of fifty farther north. It comes on the heels of a cold, dank, northerly wind, known locally as a "norther." These northers may blow steadily for anywhere from two days to a week, and when they blow, breakfast foods grow soggy in their packages, salt clogs in the shakers, and visitors and inhabitants alike shiver. The city is not prepared for cold weather.

On the other hand, during the spring and summer, the thermometer may climb into the nineties and sometimes go as high as a hundred. Even at these dizzy heights, however, one is rarely as uncomfortable as in many a coastal city further north when the thermometer stands at a mere 85° . This is because the place is entirely surrounded by water; consequently there is an almost constant breeze which serves to keep the humidity down.

The island on which the city stands is but four miles long and a mile and a half wide, leaving but little room for expansion. The only natural water on the island comes from brackish wells, unfit for

drinking purposes. This water is used for flushing and for washing to a certain extent, but all drinking water is, at present, caught from the eaves of the buildings during the rainy season and stored in huge cisterns. There is, at present, a movement afoot to build an aqueduct which will bring water down from the mainland, a distance of more than one hundred miles, but whether or not this will ever be accomplished is problematical.

Despite its handicaps and limitations, however, Key West is a city with a past. Key West may boast legitimately of a highly checkered career. It has, in times gone by, reached the highest peaks of prosperity, and it has plumbed the depths of poverty. Its vicissitudes have given it an interesting history. They have also given it an interesting character. Whether that character will withstand the shock of the present resurgence—I hesitate to call it a boom—remains to be seen.

Key West's existence was well known long before any attempt at settlement was made. As has been mentioned, the Indians of the Keys made a last desperate stand here against the marauders from the mainland. Later still, pirates found its harbor a convenient spot from which to keep a watchful eye upon the nearby Florida Straits. Fishermen from farther up the coast also knew and used it.

The first official notice of it, however, is found in a grant of the island to Juan Pablo Salas by Don Juan de Estrada, then the Spanish governor of Florida, in recognition of Salas' services as an officer in the artillery. This was in 1815. In January, 1822, Salas sold the island to John Simonton, an American, for the sum of two thousand dollars. In February of the same year Lieutenant M. C. Perry—the same Matthew C. Perry who thirty-two years later opened the ports of Japan to the commerce of the Western World—took possession of the island for the United States.

Key West leaped into immediate importance through its selection by Commodore Porter as his base of operations against the pirates who infested the surrounding waters. The story of Porter's adventures has already been told, so that it need not be repeated. It is interesting to note, however, that for more than a century thereafter

Key West remained an important link in the chain of naval stations along our eastern seaboard. It was only in 1932 that, the need for it having passed with the increased speed and cruising range of modern warships, the station was placed on the inactive list and the greater part of the personnel withdrawn. Today only a skeleton staff is maintained there, and that solely for the purpose of maintenance. Several times in its checkered career Key West has played a part in the national scheme of defense—or offense, as the case may be. During the Mexican War its strategic position was obvious, and the construction of all the existing fortifications was begun. During the Civil War it was jealously guarded by the Union Navy lest it fall into Confederate hands. Again, in the Spanish War it played an important part as a base for naval operations in Cuban waters.

But Key West's military and naval activities have been perhaps the least interesting incidents of her past. During the early forties and late thirties of the last century, Key West enjoyed the peculiar distinction of being one of the wealthiest cities per capita in the country.

This is a point of particular interest, for at that time Key West had no manufacturing industry of importance. She grew nothing that she could export. Neither was she rich in minerals. Being separated from the mainland by a chain of uninhabited islets, she could not serve as an important port of import. Doubtless she did a certain amount of trade as a transshipping port. But far and away the greater part of her wealth derived from the wrecking trade.

Some stories of the business have already been told. Doubtless there were more than a few rogues among the wrecking masters, but there must also have been honest men, for nearly every man in the town was employed in the game. One of the most conspicuous architectural features of the town today is a sort of cupola, similar to the "captain's walks" seen so frequently on houses along the New England Coast. These cupolas are found upon the older houses, and local tradition says that they once served as lookout posts for the various wrecking masters. From these vantage points a constant watch seaward was kept, for these are treacherous waters and many a ship has

found herself aground in little more than a flat calm. As soon as a ship was sighted on the reef the cry "wreck ashore" would go up and at once there would be a scramble for the boats, for it was the law that the first boat to reach the wreck had charge of the salvage operations and received extra money therefor.

In this connection, Judge Jefferson B. Browne, in his history of Key West, tells an amusing tale. During the early thirties there was no church building in Key West, and it was the custom to hold non-denominational services in the court house on Jackson Square. This is one of the highest points on the island, being all of eight feet above the level of the sea, and from the tall windows of the court house it was possible to look well out towards the reef. Now, it happened that one Sunday, as Squire Eagan, the local Methodist preacher, was conducting the services upon the rostrum, he chanced to let his gaze wander out the window, above the heads of his congregation, and saw what was invisible to his listeners below—a large brig was beating down along the channel dangerously close to the Western Sambos.

Squire Eagan was a wrecking master as well as a preacher, and so he watched with some interest, the while he kept one eye on the congregation and led them in song. It was obvious to him that the ship was going to hit. It was equally obvious that if he gave the alarm every man of the congregation would be out the door ahead of him, and he would be the last to reach the wreck. Nevertheless he must act quickly or someone outside would see the wreck and give the alarm before him.

It was a bit of luck for Squire Eagan that he happened at that moment to remember the words of Saint Paul in his First Epistle to the Corinthians, ninth chapter, twenty-fourth verse: "Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain."

Hurriedly shifting his plans, he hastened through the rest of the prayers and hymning, and began to preach extempore, taking the words of Paul as his text. So well did he play his part that he held his audience spellbound, and as he warmed to his subject he picked

up his Bible and descended from the pulpit and stalked halfway down the aisle, emphasizing his points with shaken fist or pounded book.

Twice he walked the length of the room, preaching as he went, before he returned once again to the rostrum. There, without slackening one whit the flow of words, he let his gaze drift out the window towards the reef. Yes, there she was. The brig was hard aground. Once again he picked up his Bible and started down the aisle lambasting the congregation one by one as he went, exhorting them not to be dilatory in running the race. At the end of the aisle he turned and paused. For a moment there was a dead silence. Then:

"Wreck ashore!" cried Squire Eagan. "Now we will all run a race and see who receiveth the prize!"

Needless to say, the good Squire was first to reach the wreck, and doubtless he made his fortune from it.

So long as the Florida Reef remained unlighted and unpatrolled the wrecking business flourished. Today, however, with the reef well charted and buoyed and adequately lighted the game is but a romantic memory. Occasionally one hears rumors of a captain here or there who commits barratry, usually, if the tales be true, at the behest of insurance hungry owners, but these are questionable. Today the only wrecking vessel at Key West is the ultra respectable and highly efficient salvage tug *Warbler*, belonging to the Merritt, Chapman, Scott Company and based here for emergency service.

Following the Civil War, and up to the Spanish War, Key West became a haven of refuge for Cuban patriots, forced to flee Cuba because of their revolutionary sympathies or activities. During this period many a revolutionist plot was hatched in her cafés, and many a filibustering expedition was organized, outfitted, and dispatched from there. Indeed, so active was Key West in this respect that it has been called the birthplace of Cuban independence.

Of greater importance to Key West, however, was the fact that the great majority of the emigrés were experienced cigar makers. Cigars had been made in Key West since 1831, but the factories had been small and the output unimportant, due to the lack of skilled labor, more than to any other factor, for the conditions in the island

city were ideal for the proper keeping of the leaf. This obstacle to expansion of the industry vanished with the Cuban migration of 1868, and shortly afterwards the first of the large cigar factories to be started in Key West, El Principe de Gales, was erected by Vincente Martinez Ybor. Others were quick to follow his lead, and within a decade Key West was firmly established as the cigar capital of the country.

Nearly every city of any size in the country has had at least one "great fire," remembered by all the oldsters. One such occurred in Key West, destroying the Ybor factory among others. At this time Tampa was just beginning to be civic minded. She envied Key West her position of preëminence in the cigar world, and on the heels of the fire she sent secret emissaries there to attempt to inveigle the proprietors of the burned factories to remove to Tampa. Ybor alone, at this time, heeded the call. He removed his business to the mainland, and Key Westers protested with indignant horror the villainy of the Tampans.

They would have protested much more loudly and in much more certain terms had they been able to foresee the results of the move. For Key West it was the handwriting on the wall. The section of Tampa which Ybor founded, and which today bears his name, was destined to replace Key West as the leader of the industry.

The removal did not come all at once, however, but was spread over a period of nearly forty years. A few of the factories followed Ybor before the turn of the century, but in spite of labor troubles, with which her factories were beset (one wonders here what hand Tampa may have had in the discontent) and in spite of all the siren blandishments of her neighbor on the Gulf, Key West maintained her supremacy well through the years of the World War.

But though it played a major part in it, the cigar industry was not alone in bringing wealth and prosperity to Key West. The sponge industry, if not immense, employed at least a thousand persons and produced a revenue of nearly a half a million dollars annually. This industry succumbed to the Greek invasion and gradually removed to Tarpon Springs. Today a few sponges are hooked in Key West

waters, but the business does not reach anywhere near the proportions of former days.

A third picturesque, though even smaller industry, has survived them all. This is the turtle business. Formerly these great reptiles were caught in great numbers in Key West waters, but these are no longer fished. Now the turtle schooner puts out twice each year for a voyage of three to four months, during which time she visits the coast of Nicaragua and the island of Grand Cayman. There she picks up her cargo and returns to Key West. The turtles which she brings back alive are released in the crawls located at the foot of Margaret Street, where they are kept until needed either for canning as soup or for cutting into steaks.

Anyone may visit the crawls, which are considered one of the sights of Key West, and watch the great beasts swimming ponderously about their little enclosures. Or if one is interested one may witness the butchering which generally takes place about noon. One of the native delicacies, which will invariably be offered to the northern visitor, is turtle steak. If the meat be tender and if it be properly cooked, it can be delicious. However, the prospective banqueteer should be warned that if the turtle is old or if the chef is anything but an expert at his trade, the result is more likely to resemble a slice of old rubber boot.

In 1912, when the railroad came to Key West, the city's prosperity seemed pretty well established. Despite Tampa's blandishments she was still mistress of the cigar trade. To most it seemed that with transportation to her door she could regain such ground as she had lost without much difficulty. Her population was the greatest in her history—twenty-five thousand souls. It was true the sponge industry had drifted away, but she hardly felt it—then. It seemed that everything lay ahead for her, that hard times were done and gone.

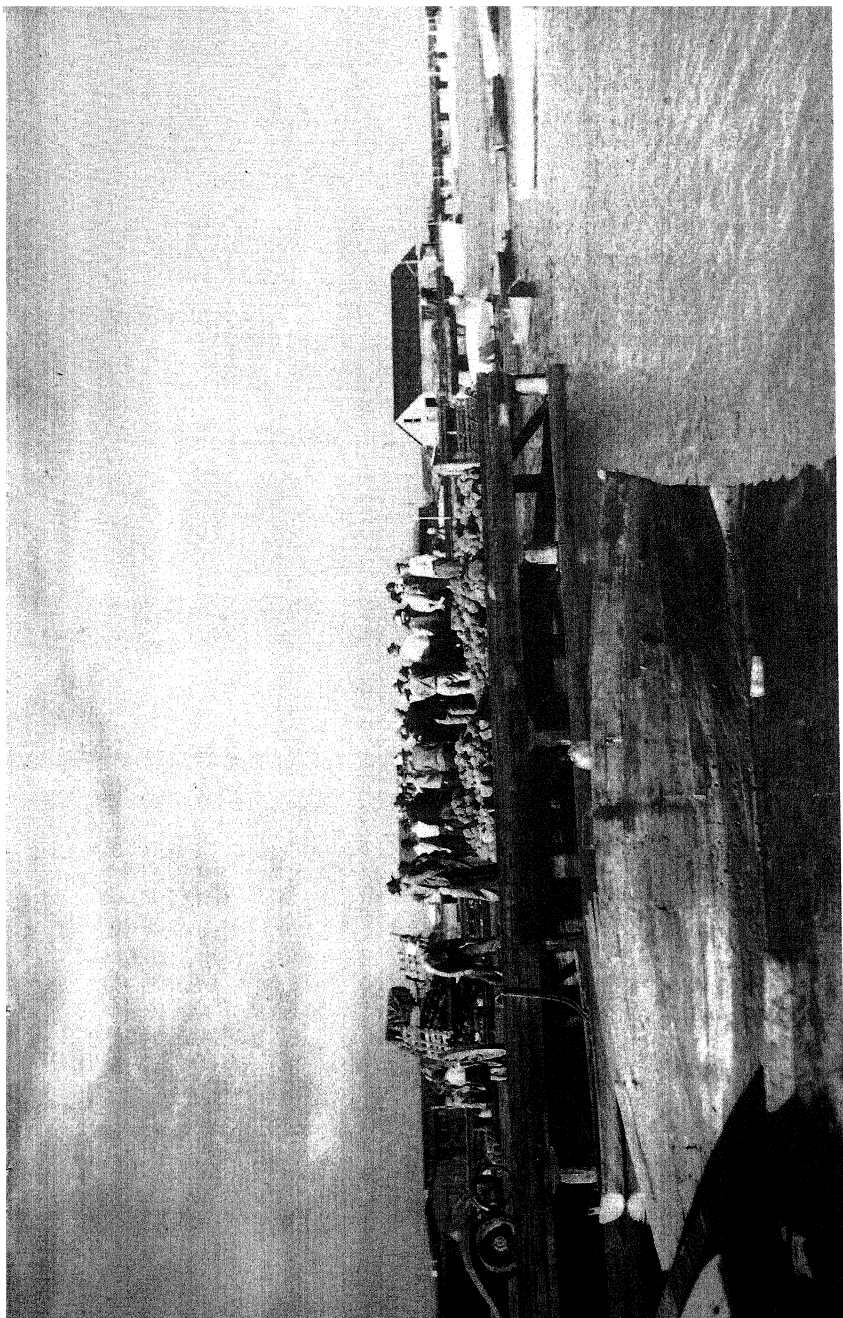
Alas for the fleeting character of appearances! In less than a quarter of a century all of Key West's apparent security and wealth had vanished into thin air. The cigar factories, abandoned, stood mere, empty, burned-out shells, looming gaunt against the horizon.

In the city that once was the leader in the industry only a few small one-room home-factories still continue to produce. The cigars are of excellent quality and reasonable price, to be sure, but they are pitifully few in number when compared with the output of former years. As for the sponge industry, one may visit the sponge dock early of a Monday, Wednesday or Friday morning, and witness the "auction." A handful of men, a good number of them representing houses in Tarpon Springs, huddle about the catch which scarcely fills a corner of the small wharf. Nobody has much to say. The bidding is done quietly, even casually. In ten or fifteen minutes it is over. The crowd breaks up and moves away. An old man loads the catch, all at once, upon a rickety wagon pulled by an ancient nag, and drives away.

Not far from the sponge dock lie the tracks and sidings of the Florida East Coast Railway, silent now and deserted. Ships which had formerly called regularly no longer tied up to her wharves. If ever a city was unprepared for a major depression, it was Key West. What followed was inevitable. Forced to default on her bonds, unable to pay her employees, the city in 1934 was absolutely bankrupt. In the emergency the city did the only thing it could do. It appealed to Governor Sholtz for relief. Governor Sholtz recognized the emergency immediately, and in June 1934 the Florida Emergency Relief Administration under the direction of Julius Stone took over the rehabilitation of the city.

Key West was fortunate in having Mr. Stone in charge of the program. Where another might have been content merely to dole out relief where needed, Mr. Stone cast about for something more permanent. It was no use to try and bring back those industries which had deserted her. They were gone for good. The Keys produced nothing that could be exported in sufficient quantities to support them, or even be manufactured into finished goods. She was no longer a port of importance. To the casual observer it seemed as if there was nothing left but gradual abandonment.

One asset, however, Key West had—her climate. Regularly during the winter months Key West is from five to fifteen degrees



On Monday, Wednesday, and Friday mornings, auctions are held on the sponge dock in Key West.



At Jewfish Key is the first span of the new Key West-Overseas Highway.

warmer than Miami. Her percentage of cloudy days is smaller. She has all about her some of the bluest, clearest, most colorful waters in the world, and her beaches, if not startling, are adequate. In addition to this she has some of the finest fishing to be found in Florida. Sailfish, marlin, dolphin, amberjack, bonito, mackerel, barracuda, grouper, and a host of others abound in the waters of the Gulf Stream nearby and along the reefs that ring the island. Monster jewfish can be taken from the bridges between Key West and the ferries. So may tarpon and shark and sometimes wahoo and snook. In the passes between the bridges one can always catch all manner of smaller fish—grunts, snappers, yellowtail, hogfish, small grouper, runners and not infrequently a jack. In the offshore waters the kingfish run in great schools. Nor does Key West want for party boats. There are plenty of them.

These were the things that Key West had and Julius Stone was quick to size up their obvious implications. If Key West was to survive at all it must be as a winter tourist resort. With this in mind he went to work.

The town was cleaned up and brightened. Sanitary services, which had been suspended when the city went broke, were renewed. The beaches were made attractive. Some of the most dilapidated shacks were pulled down, and others were rebuilt for the accommodation of tourists. The golf course was rebuilt, the whole town spruced up. The building of the overseas road itself was a part of this project.

The completion of the new road in the spring of 1938 completed the program and replaced Key West upon her feet. That the public is willing to go there if it can was evidenced by the fact that on the first day a total of thirty-five hundred cars paid toll to travel the road southbound. Today the clatter of hammers, the whoop of saws, the rattle of construction is heard is every part of the island. Key West has begun to live again.

The first impression of Key West is one of rather picturesque gone-to-seedness. Rickety, unpainted shacks line the streets. Most of the larger more pretentious houses show marks of neglect. There are no major "sights" to see. To be sure, signs point the way to the

turtle crawls, to the sponge wharf, to the naval station, to Fort Taylor, to Rest Beach, and to the Convent of Mary Immaculate, but these are but slight attractions. The one great monument which Key West can boast is to all intents and purposes inaccessible. Fort Jefferson, begun in 1846 and completed in 1861, covers sixteen of Garden Key's twenty-five acres, and is among the largest and most interesting of America's historic fortifications. Its gigantic walls are hexagonal in shape and are surrounded by a deep moat which, rumor says, was once kept filled with voracious man-eating sharks to prevent prisoners from escaping. It was never used for its original purpose—as a naval supply station and fortress commanding the Gulf of Mexico. Instead it served as a prison during and after the Civil War. The one famous prisoner who was kept here was Dr. Samuel Mudd, the country doctor who set the broken leg of John Wilkes Booth after his assassination of Lincoln. Dr. Mudd's romantic story, how he was unjustly imprisoned, how he saved the lives of many of his fellow prisoners and the garrison during a yellow fever epidemic, and how he was subsequently pardoned and released, was dramatically portrayed in a motion picture entitled *The Prisoner of Shark Island*, released in 1936. Surely Fort Jefferson is a tourist attraction of the first water—but it lies sixty-five miles west of Key West, and it is accessible only by chartered boat, a fact which makes it an expensive excursion beyond the reach of many who would otherwise be glad to visit it. Today it is a national monument, and the Federal Government is working to restore it and make it more accessible.

But with such a lack of sights and monuments, what is it that makes Key West so popular among those who know her? She is the southernmost city in the country. That in itself is enough to draw many a passing tourist to her shores, but it does not explain why many return to her year after year.

The answer lies in the character of the city itself. Key West is unique among cities. Her large Cuban element lend her a foreign and somewhat exotic air, an air which is heightened by her languorous climate. At the same time she is sufficiently American to be modern. Despite her languor she has caught some of the spirit of her more

northerly neighbors, and the combination is definitely charming. She is, at the same time, a simple city. Her pleasures are of the less spectacular sort. There are no great race tracks—either dog or horse—to draw the flashy set. Her night clubs—and she has several—are unpretentious and democratic. One may dress or not as one pleases. Nobody minds, and everyone has a good time, be it at Rauls or Pena's or the Havana-Madrid or Sloppy Joes or even at the Cave. There is no such establishment here as Bradley's, but if one likes to gamble just a little for the fun of it one may find a game with the dice or under the umbrella—a sort of bastard form of roulette—or chuck-a-luck. And every visitor to Key West ought to play bolito at least once for the insight into the native character it affords. Bolito is played in any number of the small Cuban cafés.

In addition to all this Key West is cheerful. There is poverty here—dire, abject poverty; all too much of it. Yet one rarely sees a gloomy countenance upon the street. Key West is a city of optimists!

Key West offers a variety of accommodations for a variety of tastes. Almost any type of space one desires is available; and the only complaint that anyone might make on that score is that there are not enough rooms to go round. For this reason it is best to write or wire ahead for reservations to one of the several hotels. The Casa Marina, owned and operated by the Florida East Coast Railway, is a comfortable resort hotel with rates that begin at \$6.00 to \$8.00 per day, American plan. It has its private beach and tennis courts, and is located on the south side of the island. In the center of the town, at the junction of Fleming and Duval Streets, is the La Concha; more commercial in character than the Casa Marina, but modern and comfortable. Its rates begin at \$2.00 per day, European plan. Other hotels are the Oversea and the Gibson, both clean but unpretentious frame buildings on Fleming Street. Their rates begin at \$1.00 per day, European. At the time this was written at least one new hotel was projected, though when this will be opened is as yet indefinite.

In addition to the hotels there are a number of boarding houses and "tourist homes" scattered through the town, though these are by

no means as plentiful as they are in towns of similar size on the mainland. As they are not located in any particular section it would take too much time and space to give here explicit directions as to how to find them. However, if one rides about town at all, even if only to enter from the east and cross from one side to the other, one can scarcely miss seeing one or more of their signs. There are several small apartment buildings, where furnished apartments may be had by the month or season. It is also possible, if one applies early enough, to find furnished houses at rates which range from \$35.00 per month to \$2500 for the season.

Those who plan to spend some time—a week, a month, or even a season—in Key West will not find time hanging heavily on their hands. True, it is a quiet place. One does not find there the hectic life of Miami or other large resort cities. But if one does not demand race meets and swank clubs and gorgeous, gaudy night clubs with elaborate reviews, Key West offers all that could be desired. There is a reasonably sporty little nine-hole golf course on Stock Island, at which visiting players are welcome. There are several tennis courts. A number of shops rent bicycles, and, the island being so nearly level, this is an ideal form of transportation. The bathing is delightful. Both the town's two beaches are on the south side of the island. South Beach, being at the foot of Duval Street, is nearest the center of town. Rest Beach is somewhat further east, on the other side of the Casa Marina and West Martello Tower, at the foot of White Street. Those who prefer diving will find what they are looking for at the Yacht Basin at the northwest end of the island. In addition to these there is a free municipal pool on Roosevelt Boulevard which is very popular.

One of Key West's greatest attractions, however, is the fishing. It is safe to say that this draws more visitors to the island city than any other one thing. And well it might. The farthest south among American cities, the waters that surround her on every hand literally teem with fish ranging in size from tiny sardines to monster marlin and jewfish. Bottom and handline fishermen will find excellent fishing from the various bridges along the highway or from skiffs or

small sailboats which are available at Rest Beach. Needless to say, for such fishing one needs his own tackle. Menendez, in charge of the boats can advise where to obtain bait and what sort is best. Party excursion boats, such as are common along the coast farther north, are not, as yet, to be found in Key West. This is due mainly to the fact that most of the heavy fish are taken by trolling off the reefs, some six miles off shore, or in the Gulf Stream. For this parties must necessarily be small as even with the use of outriggers no more than four lines should be out at once. Hence parties should not exceed, at the very most, eight persons. Boats as a rule cost \$25. per day, which includes such tackle as is necessary, bait, and the services of the guide. At first glance this may seem somewhat stiff, but next time you pass your favorite tackle store, step in and price a good outfit suitable for taking sailfish. This will afford some idea of what a Key West skipper must invest in tackle alone—and when it is further understood that it is a fairly common occurrence for a greenhorn, on hooking his first “sail,” to let rod, reel, hook, line and sinker go overboard in his excitement, the rate seems a little more reasonable! Logically, the trick is to make up a party, so as to spread the expenses. There is always someone in Key West who wants to go fishing. Any of the hotels or the local Chamber of Commerce will arrange for boats. From his own experience the writer can recommend Captains Bra Sanders and Jakie Key and Bradley, of the “Li'l Dot.” There are others, of course—good men all—but these I have fished with. Those who prefer to use their own tackle will find that they can replenish their stocks from the well-supplied shelves of the several local hardware stores.

The boom which the opening of the overseas highway is bringing in its wake will no doubt bring money into Key West, providing thereby support, a living, even prosperity to many who need it sorely. Yet those who have known Key West in the past and have come to have a real affection and understanding for her look upon it, somewhat selfishly perhaps, with misgiving. They watch her progress with interest and with bated breath, remembering what has happened at Miami and Palm Beach and St. Petersburg and other boom cities

of the peninsula. And they hope fervently, as all who enjoy simplicity and abhor artificiality will hope with them, that all that was attractive in this most tropical corner of continental United States will not be totally destroyed by it.

PART II
PUERTO RICO

- VI. Borinquen*
- VII. Facts, Figures, and a Few Conclusions*
- VIII. The Island—The Rich Port*
- IX. The Island—In the Shadow of El Yunque*
- X. The Island—Ponce and the South Coast*
- XI. The Island—Mayaguez, the West and the North*

BORINQUEN

Chapter VI

COLUMBUS, sailing upon his second voyage of discovery, led his fleet of tiny vessels out of the harbor of Cadiz on the twenty-fifth day of September in the year 1493. He sailed westward for some time, until he picked up the northeast trades. Then he turned and ran before them in a general southwesterly direction.

He made his landfall on the third day of November, when a high jungle-clad island rose out of the blue seas ahead. Because the day was Sunday he called the island Dominica. On the following day he turned northward and dropped anchor off Guadeloupe. Here he encountered the same warlike Carib Indians, who inhabited all the islands of the Lesser Antilles. But in addition he found others, prisoners of the Caribs, who had been brought by their captors from a large island lying to the northwestward. These people spoke of the homeland as "Boriquen," a name which the Great Admiral and his followers quickly corrupted to "Borinquen" or "Burenquen." Columbus made a note of the name in his diary and sailed away. This is the first mention, of which there is any record, of the island which we call today Puerto Rico.

After leaving Guadeloupe, Columbus sailed north and west among the Leeward Islands, sighting and naming Montserrat, Antigua, Nevis and St. Christopher—now more popularly known as St. Kitts. On the fourteenth he dropped anchor off an island which the Indians called Ayay, where his shore parties had a brush with the natives in the course of which one of the Indians was killed, and one of the Spaniards died soon afterwards from the effects of a wound received from

a poisoned arrow. The poison was probably manchineel which is abundant on the island.

The Admiral himself did not land, but from the deck of his flagship, the *Marie Galante*, claimed the island for the Spanish Crown and named it Santa Cruz. The next day he raised anchor and bore away northward toward some land which could be faintly made out upon the horizon.

Arriving offshore, he saw that what he had believed was a single island from a distance proved on closer inspection to be not one but many. Accordingly he dropped anchor and sent a small caravel among them to reconnoitre. Toward nightfall the caravel returned with the report that there were upwards of fifty islands and islets in the archipelago, apparently inhabited. At this news the pious Admiral threw up his hands in despair at ever being able to find a suitable name for each and salved his conscience by calling what appeared to be the largest of the group St. Ursula, and lumping the rest collectively under the title of the Eleven Thousand Virgins. Authorities differ as to which of the islands he named St. Ursula. Some say it was Virgin Gorda, but it is more probable that it was St. Thomas since, coming from St. Croix, as he did, he would be more likely to make his landfall either there or at St. John. Columbus himself said that he named the highest for the patroness of chastity. This would have been Tortola, if the great discoverer were held to be strictly accurate, but it is doubtful if he could have distinguished Tortola from St. John as, when approached from the south, it lies behind the latter island as well as a chain of smaller islets which includes Norman, Peter, Salt, Cooper, Ginger, and Virgin Gorda. Consequently, of the two larger islands which fell within his range of vision, the highest was St. Thomas.

However that may be, he did not land, but sailed away again, this time bearing southwestward. With the wind behind him he made good speed, and before sundown spied off his starboard quarter the high forest clad slopes of a large island which his captives informed him was Borinquen. This was on the sixteenth day of November, 1493.

For a day he skirted the south coast of the island, standing off and on, observing its obvious beauty and evident fertility. Describing the event, one of the members of the expedition in a letter says: "In the afternoon we arrived in sight of another island called Burenquen, along the coast of which we ran for the entire day. We judged that it extended thirty leagues on that side. This island to appearance is very beautiful and very fertile. The people from the Caribs come here to make conquests and they take many people away. These people have no fustas and do not know how to sail on the sea. But, according to what these Caribs with whom we talked say, they use bows the same as they (the Caribs) do; and if by chance when the Caribs come to assault them they are able to capture them, they also eat the Caribs as the Caribs eat them. We remained two days in one harbor of this island, where many of the people landed. But we never were able to talk with them, for they all fled away like people who were terrorized by the Caribs. All of these islands mentioned were discovered on this voyage, for until now the Admiral had not seen any of them on the first voyage. All are very beautiful and the land is very good, but this one appears best of all."

The harbor in which they dropped anchor, on the second day after the sighting of the island, it has been fairly accurately established was that of Aguada, a small town on the northwest coast not far from the city of Aguadilla. The village which they found there was neat and clean, but deserted for, as the old observer hints, the inhabitants had been terrorized by years of Carib raids, and trusted nothing that came from the sea. Columbus himself landed on the third day after sighting the island—November 19, 1493—and claimed it for their Most Catholic Majesties, naming it in accordance with his pious habit, San Juan Bautista (St. John the Baptist), a name which in later years came to designate rather the principal city than the island as a whole.

Columbus did not tarry long. He was anxious to get on to Santo Domingo, where on his first voyage he had planted a small colony. Some time later, in Spain, when he was asked by the Queen what the island was like, it is said that he took a sheet of paper and crumpled it in his hand and tossed it upon the table. "It is like that, Your

Majesty," he is reported to have said. If this tale be true of every island of which it is told, the Queen's wastebasket must have been kept full of crumpled balls of paper. Nor was paper the common article in those days that it is now. Doubtless Columbus was one of those strong silent fellows, but there was no need for him to go around wasting the Queen's good stationery. Possibly, this had something to do with his loss of favor at Court. At the very least the Queen could hardly be blamed for being annoyed.

The simile, however, is an apt one, for Puerto Rico's is most certainly a crumpled landscape.

Columbus himself never returned to the island which he discovered. One of his followers, however, did. Juan Ponce de León, of whom we have already heard something, was a youthful member of the expedition, and the island evidently made a lasting impression upon him, for he carried its memory with him for fifteen years before destiny singled him out to become the founder of a colony there.

Juan Ponce settled in Hispaniola—that is, present Santo Domingo—where he rose to a position of some power and respectability. From time to time he doubtless heard tales of the neighboring island from friendly Indians, and in 1508 he persuaded the Governor, Ovando, to allow him to lead an expedition thither. That colonization was not his sole aim is evidenced by a contract which he signed with the governor for the division of such gold as he might find: One fifth was to go to the Crown, two fifths were to go to the State, and the balance was to go to the leader of the expedition. Poor Ponce, even then he was chasing rainbows!

Now, when the trades are blowing one may run down from Puerto Rico to Santo Domingo City, that was—it is Trujillo City now, after the Dictator—under sail in not more than twenty-four hours. To make the voyage in the other direction, however, is another matter. De León's expedition sailed on July 12. It was a month exactly to the day before he dropped anchor in the bay at Guanica on the south side of the island. On the way he had been delayed by head winds and storms. His provisions had been ruined

by sea water, and he had been forced to replenish them at Mona Island. Later he had been close to being wrecked at Cabo Rojo.

But all is well that ends well. The battered voyagers rested for a day or two in the sheltered bay which nearly four centuries later was to see the first landing of American troops upon the island, and then sailed on eastward along the coast. They took a leisurely pace, stopping here and there to parley and trade with the natives. They passed Ponce's nearly open roadstead and looked into other little coves and inlets along the south and east coast without finding one that suited their purpose. Probably they landed on Vieques, the large island lying off the eastern end of Puerto Rico. After that they turned the northeast corner of the island and headed back along the north shore. At length they rounded a high, bold headland and sailed into a broad, deep, almost landlocked harbor where they anchored and went ashore.

De León was impressed. They rested here several days, and then went on along the coast. But finding nothing better they returned in the end to the wide bay behind the headland. They had found no gold, but Juan Ponce was sharp enough to see the potential wealth of the land. Again they landed and cleared some ground for farming on the inland side of the bay. After erecting a few temporary buildings de León left a few of his followers to hold the ground, and returned to Santo Domingo. In the following year he was back again, this time with a force sufficient to establish a permanent colony and a commission in his pocket from the Governor of the Indies naming him governor of the new settlement.

The colony was begun at Caparra, across the harbor from the present site of the capital city and a little west. From the very start it did well. There Ponce established his family upon a large estate and settled down to watch this child of his creating grow. His itching feet, however, would not leave him long in peace, and three years later he was off again upon the voyage in which he discovered the mainland of Florida. On his return the internal affairs of the island occupied his attention for several years. There was the Indian problem to be dealt with, and it was growing more and more apparent

that in choosing the site of Caparra he had made a mistake. At length it was decided to remove the settlement across the bay to the healthier heights of the island which guarded the entrance to the harbor. There work was begun upon a magnificent residence, the Casablanca, which still stands today and serves as the residence of the commandant of the island's military forces.

Ponce de León, however, was never destined to occupy his palace. In the same year in which the settlement was removed across the bay he suffered another attack of that old restlessness which carried him off on his final expedition. He sailed this time for the West Coast of Florida, where the fate that awaited him has already been told.

There was not a little poetic justice in his end. Some time before his departure on his final journey he had dealt summarily with the natives of the island. These people, the Arawaks, were considerably less warlike than the fierce Caribs who inhabited the islands to the east and south. They were inclined, at first to be peaceable and friendly. But the Spaniards, never noted for their gentleness towards subject peoples, would have none of it. The Indians soon felt the weight of their oppression. Many of their numbers were captured and enslaved under the most cruel conditions.

Beneath all this, however, they remained docile for an amazing length of time. There is a legend to the effect that they submitted because of a mistaken belief that the white men, with their great winged war canoes, their iron clothing, and their sticks that went boom with a great flash and puff of smoke and killed whatever looked into them, were immortal. At length, driven by desperation, some of the bolder ones among them thought to test the accuracy of the theory by the simple expedient of holding the body of one, Salcedo, a planter, under water until he ceased his struggles. When it was apparent that life had fled, they brought him to dry land and placed a guard upon him to see if life should return. In that climate it was not many days before their noses told them that Salcedo had indeed been mortal.

Word of this experiment spread swiftly, according to the story, and the Indians rose in rebellion against their oppressors. Whether

or not the tale is true, the Indians certainly rose. They attacked a settlement at Aguada, sacked and burned it, and slaughtered its inhabitants. As soon as word of the uprising reached Caparra, de León set forth with a small army upon a campaign of extermination which, in its small way, was characterized by as much ruthlessness as was the conquest of Mexico and Peru. When it was finished no more than a scattered handful of the frightened savages remained, hidden in the fastnesses of the hills. These dared not show their faces, and from that day the white man was supreme.

But, though de León died, the colony which he had fostered flourished. His family moved into the house that had been begun for him, and his son-in-law adopted his name—thereby accounting for the legend that Ponce de León himself lived there. Gradually the great ring of fortifications which still surrounds the city was built: first the Fortaleza, then the Morro—San Felipe del Morro, to give it its whole name, or St. Phillip of the Knoll—and the minor fortifications around Escambron, and finally the mighty San Cristobal; until, in the end, the city on the rock became known as one of the most impregnable in the new world.

All this took time, however. It was nearly two hundred years before the gigantic task was completed. In the meantime, the day being what it was, the island city came in for more than its share of siege and attack. In 1535 and again in 1543 French privateers harried the coast. In 1565 Sir John Hawkins attacked the city but was repulsed. In 1572 Drake tried his hand at it, but was driven off in one of his rare defeats. In 1595 Drake and Hawkins combined forces against it, having heard that a treasure fleet had put into the harbor with over four million dollars in gold on board. The gold was there, but it was not in the ships. It had been placed in the Fortaleza for safe keeping.

Drake appeared off the city early in the morning and was greeted by heavy fire from the forts. One of the shells struck Drake's ship and killed several on board. It is also claimed by some that Sir John Hawkins was killed at this time, but other authorities state that the old sea dog died off the eastern end of the island after the British

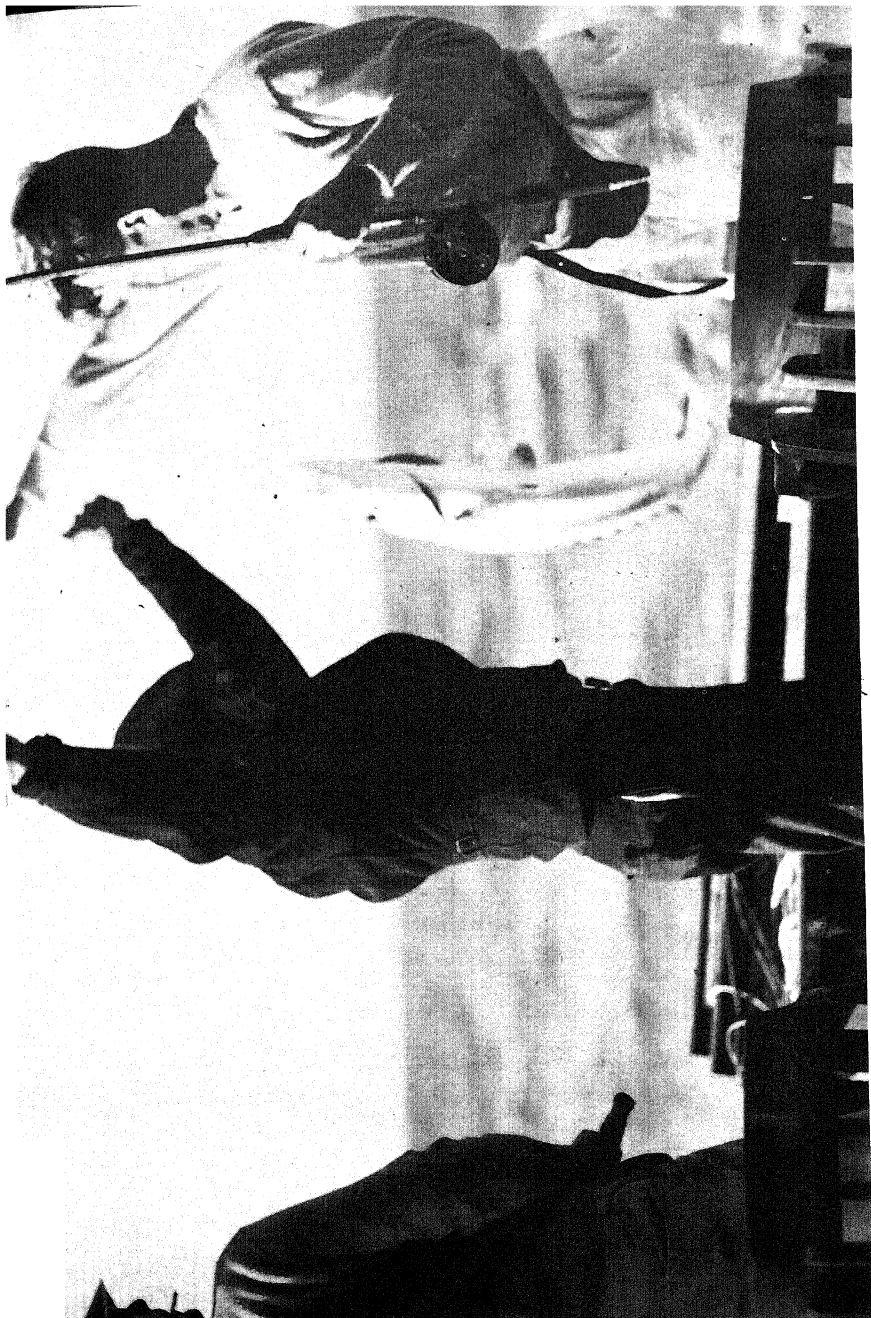
had withdrawn. On the following day they returned, giving the forts a wide berth, and sailed in behind Cabras Island, whence Drake himself reconnoitred the harbor in a small boat. That night he tried a surprise attack upon the shipping in the harbor and succeeded in setting fire to one of the ships of the fleet. The light of the blaze, however, enabled the gunners in the fort to see the English clearly, and they poured such a hot fire upon them that they were forced to retire. After that Drake waited another day, but finally saw the futility of the attempt and sailed away. He died before he reached Porto Bello—of a broken heart, some say.

Three years later, in 1598, the English tried again under the Earl of Cumberland. They landed first in present Condado and attempted to force their way across the San Antonio Bridge, but were repulsed. They then sent a landing force ashore between the Escambron and the city. The defenders retired to the Morro and the British advanced and took the city. The fort at Escambron, cut off from the main garrison, fell after fierce hand-to-hand fighting. Cumberland held the city for five months, and finally forced the surrender of the Morro, but on the eve of success an epidemic broke out among the invaders which forced them to abandon their conquest. When Spanish reinforcements arrived in the following year to drive the English out, they found them already gone.

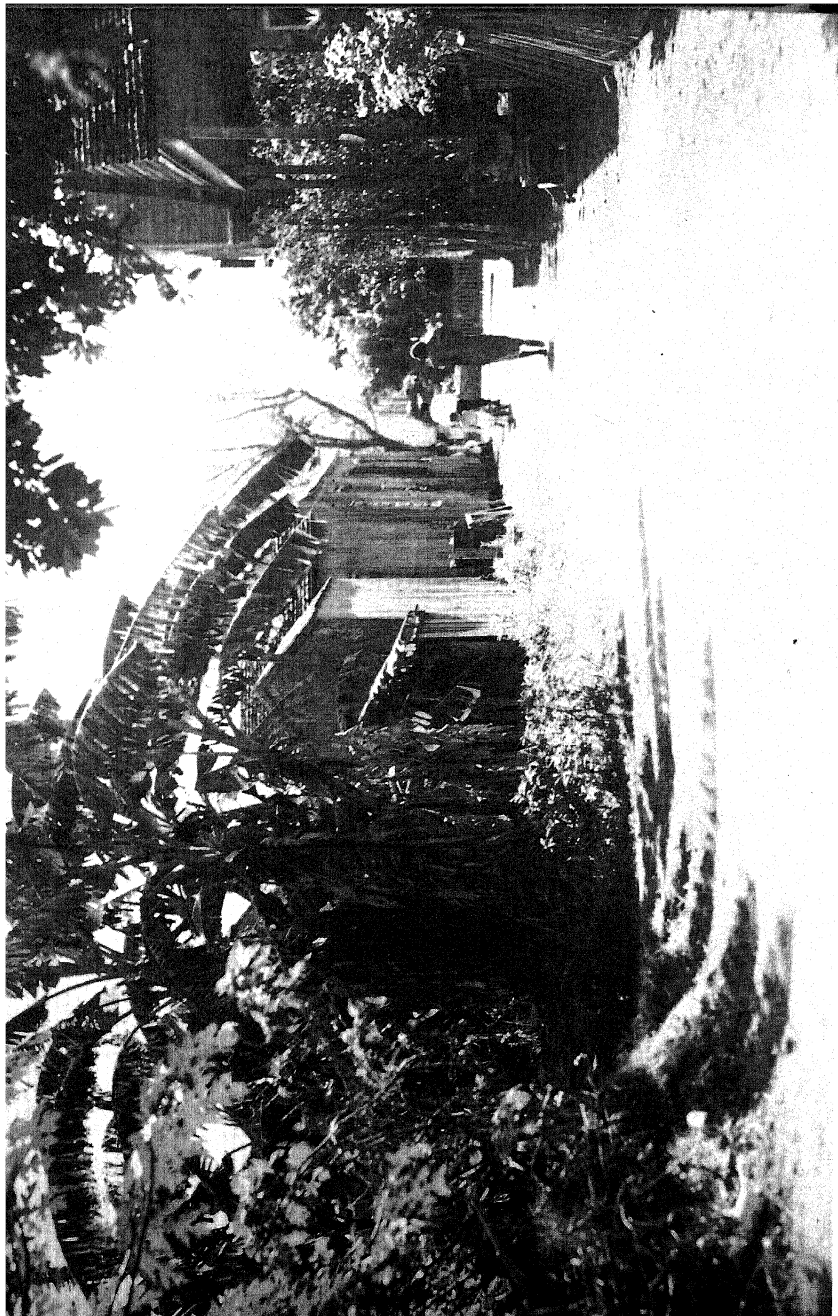
In 1625 a Dutch fleet laid siege to the city. They bombarded the forts and succeeded in landing and capturing the city, but they were unable to force the surrender of the defenders in the Morro. For thirty-eight days they pounded it with heavy fire, and in the end withdrew, after burning and sacking much of the city.

One other serious attempt was made to capture the city by the British in 1797. This time they landed with seven thousand men on the beach at Cangrejos, not far from the present site of the Condado Hotel, and attempted to force their way past the fortifications at the east end of San Juan Island. They were beaten back, however, and withdrew without making any further attempts upon the city.

Thereafter, it was a hundred years before an enemy fleet again ventured to attack the ancient port. In 1898 the American fleet under



Barracuda are so common as to be considered a nuisance.



Tropical foliage shades Key West's quaint, unfrequented alleyways.

Admiral Sampson bombarded the city for a few hours without serious damage. Since that day the only fire of artillery that has ruffled the calm of the island city has been the occasional boom of saluting cannon barking welcome to presidents and official dignitaries bent on visits of state or pleasure.

But the story of Puerto Rico during these times is not entirely one of battle and bloodshed. Indeed, although it is spectacular, that part is but an infinitesimal portion of the picture. The development that was taking place in the rest of the island, while much more leisurely and less apparent, was none the less of far greater import in the general scheme of things. Throughout these years the interior was gradually being opened, settled, farmed, and developed. Other seaports and towns were being established. Gradually the name which had originally been bestowed upon the island, San Juan Bautista, came to be applied to the principal city, and the name of the city, Puerto Rico, was used for the island as a whole. In 1523 the first sugar mill was established, though it was not until after the American occupation that sugar became the all important crop that it is today. During the Spanish regime coffee was the principal crop and article of export. Puerto Rican coffee was renowned throughout the world for its excellence, and in many parts of Europe no other kind would find a market. But of late competition with other much greater producing areas has all but killed off the trade.

There were other crops and other products during the four hundred years that the island remained a Spanish colony. There was no gold or silver. The island never sent back to Spain enough to support the mother country in luxury, as did some of her other possessions, but throughout the centuries she was a steady source of small income.

This fact, however, did not appear to be much appreciated at home. Though, in the nineteenth century, the rest of her colonies turned away from her, leaving only Cuba, the Philippines, and Puerto Rico, she appeared not to have learned any lesson from the loss. In vain might her remaining colonies beg representation in Spain and some degree of parliamentary home rule. The same oppressive meth-

ods that had turned her South American colonies from her remained in use. The same harsh military rule continued. The same rigid and distrustful discipline was maintained. Throughout the century Cuba was the most rebellious of the three. From 1850 she was in a constant state of ferment. The Philippines, too, protested vigorously. But Puerto Rico never went along with them. Only once, in 1868, was there an armed outbreak. Attempts on the part of both Cuban and Puerto Rican revolutionaries, working from New York and Havana, to foment an open rebellion failed miserably. The people might be discontented. They might wish for a measure of independence from their unnatural parent, but they appeared to prefer peaceful means of obtaining it.

So it was that when all the others were turning away, Puerto Rico alone remained loyal. But for all their loyalty it almost appeared that virtue must be its own reward.

Such, at least, was the outlook when in 1891 a young patriot, Luis Munoz Rivera appeared on the scene. Rivera, a firm believer in the efficacy of negotiation, headed a delegation to Spain to confer with the liberal leader, Sagasta. He won an assurance from Sagasta that the island would be granted autonomy when and if ever Sagasta and his party came into power.

It was a small thing, but it was something. Many refused to place any faith in it whatever. But six years later, when Sagasta became Prime Minister in 1897, one of his first moves was to fulfill his promise. The grant of autonomy as set forth by him called for a lower house of representatives, to be elected by popular vote, one representative for every twenty-five thousand inhabitants, and an upper house called the Council of Administration, to be composed of fifteen members, seven to be appointed by the Governor-General in the name of the King, and the rest to be elected. The powers of this governing body were to enact local legislation and levy taxes to provide for a public treasury, as well as to fix the island budget. They might enact and fix import duties and enter into commercial treaties with the approval of the home government. Puerto Rico was to continue to be represented in the Spanish Cortes, though the Crown continued

to hold sovereign rights and military power and would appoint the Governor General.

Thus was virtual independence within Puerto Rico's grasp. Governor Macias at once appointed a cabinet of six members, three each from the two outstanding political parties—Munoz Rivera himself being one of the six.

But it was too late. Spain's motives may have been of the purest. Or the grant may have been but a sop to pacify a restless population momentarily. There was no time to put it to the test, for only two days after the new government was proclaimed the American battleship *Maine* was blown up in Havana harbor.

The American occupation of Puerto Rico came as the result of an afterthought. Up to the time of the declaration of war our attentions had all been focused, with great success, by Mr. Pulitzer and Mr. Hearst, upon the spectacle of bleeding Cuba. It takes a crusade to rouse us as a nation; to whip us into an hysterical frenzy of sufficient power to send us to war. We need some such idealistic dummy as the safety of democracy or the rescue of the downtrodden before we will blind ourselves to realities. We told the world and ourselves that we wanted nothing from this war. Our sole object, so we said, was to lift the yoke of oppression from the neck of Cuba. But nobody believed it but ourselves.

Once we were in the thick of it, however, to prevent the Spaniards from attacking our back door—across some seven thousand miles of ocean—Dewey took Manila. Nobody really gave any serious thought to the possibility of a Spanish thrust across the Pacific. The taking of Manila was in reality just a victory over an enemy and needed no further justification. The possibility of an attack upon our Atlantic seaboard was equally remote, if we but knew it. But the trouble was we did not know it. With war once declared, the rumor was not long in spreading that the Spaniards were preparing to descend upon our shores in force. Nearly every point upon the coast came in for designation as the chosen spot, but the one spot to which the most

elaborate rumors pointed was somewhere in the vicinity of Cape Hatteras.

To think of Cervera with his antiquated, ill equipped fleet attempting anything so aggressive is, at this date, clearly ridiculous. It is more ridiculous still to think of a force being landed at Hatteras. Anyone who has seen the barren, desolate, sandy waste that stretches southward from Cape Henry to Cape Hatteras and around to Wilmington, North Carolina, will appreciate the futility of such a scheme. Even the most casual glance at the map will show that such a landing force would yet be separated from the mainland by the waters of Pamlico Sound. And after all, the Spaniards were not fools. Nevertheless, the rumor was given credence in some quarters and created quite a furor up and down the coast.

It was largely as a result of this that Sampson was dispatched to San Juan. It was believed in official circles that Cervera would head for that port, whence he could either sail for Cuba or for American waters as he chose. And indeed, San Juan was Cervera's original destination. He had his own difficulties, however, which prevented his ever going there.

In the meantime the dispatch of the fleet to San Juan had brought Puerto Rico to the attention of the United States. If it was logical that we should set out to capture the Philippines, was it not so much more logical that we should also take this other Spanish colony, which was so much nearer and therefore so much more dangerous potentially?

The line of reasoning is abundantly clear. The actual preparations which led to the expedition need not be recorded here. On July 25, 1898, the first American troops landed at Guanica, and after some slight opposition took over the district. On that day the American flag was raised for the first time on Puerto Rico. On the twenty-eighth General Miles with the bulk of the army arrived off Ponce, where he landed at once and received the surrender of the unfortified city. By the first of August there were some fifteen thousand American troops on the island distributed entirely along the south coast at Guanica, Yauco, Ponce and Guayama. The plan of campaign was

for a converging advance towards the center of the island, and thereafter a triumphal march for the combined forces on San Juan, which was simultaneously to be attacked from the sea.

The American advance was begun according to plan, and the Spanish forces were quickly driven from the coastal plains to strong positions in the hills. Before any real test could be made, however, the news of the armistice put a halt to all hostilities. What would have been the result of a protracted campaign is now hard to say. There is no doubt, though, that our troops would have found themselves up against much stronger opposition than they had anticipated. The Spanish forces numbered some seventeen thousand regulars and volunteers, and there can be no question of their bravery. The positions to which they had retired were well chosen. They were strongly entrenched and the steep hillsides were well covered with artillery emplacements which could rake every road and pathway through the mountains. Puerto Rico was cut off from reinforcements from home. The Americans might have been reinforced indefinitely. Of the ultimate outcome there is no doubt. But had the war not ended when it did there is every likelihood that the Puerto Rican campaign would have become one of the severest and most bitterly contested of them all.

The armistice was announced on August 12. On September 10 the commanders of the American forces met with the Spanish evacuation commissioners and the Governor-General in San Juan. At sundown on October 17 the Spanish flags were hauled down for the last time, and at noon the next day the American flag was raised over every public building. In a week the last of the Spanish troops had sailed out of the harbor, and the island was left in American hands. On December 10 the treaty of cession was signed in Paris. On February 6, 1899, it was ratified by Congress, and on April 11 President McKinley proclaimed to the American people that henceforth Puerto Rico was part and parcel of the United States.

FACTS, FIGURES, AND A FEW CONCLUSIONS

Chapter VII

WE HAD our cake. We meant to eat it, too. We had rescued bleeding Cuba, with the aid of Pulitzer and Hearst. And we had got something for ourselves in the bargain. Everyone was much gratified, even though not very many people in the United States at that time knew what or where Puerto Rico was. This was not altogether amazing. Even today the great bulk of Americans have only the foggiest notions concerning its exact whereabouts and character.

To begin with, then, what and where was this new land we had added to our list of territorial possessions?

Puerto Rico is an island, 1,399 miles southeast of New York and 963 miles east of Key West, lying in latitude $18^{\circ} 15' N.$ and longitude $66^{\circ} 30' W.$ A part of the West Indies, it is the easternmost of the group of islands known as the Greater Antilles. About a hundred miles long by some forty wide, it is washed on the north by the Atlantic and on the south by the Caribbean. To westward it is separated from Santo Domingo by the Mona Passage; some seventy miles wide. Forty miles or so to eastward lie the Virgin Islands. Puerto Rico itself has three other island dependencies: Mona, a tiny islet off the west coast in Mona Passage, which has lately been slated for intensive development as a sportsman's resort; Culebra, a rocky, barren, waterless isle, some twenty miles east, the scene during the winter of 1938 of extensive naval maneuvers; and Vieques, or Crab Island, a large inhabited island, twenty-two miles long by six broad, lying just off the southeast coast.

The general aspect of the countryside is rugged. Everywhere

curious little peaked hills and steep ridges rise sharply against the sky. A tumbled ridge of mountains and mountain spurs runs the length of the island from west to east, rising to a height of some four thousand feet—not an impressive altitude to one reared in the hills, but a truly imposing mountain mass when viewed from sea level. The island is well watered, but successive centuries of cultivation have, except for a few scattered spots in the mountains, all but denuded the land of its forests. The total area is some 3,350 square miles—a little smaller than Connecticut, a little larger than Delaware. At the time of our occupation the population numbered just a little under a million.

This was Puerto Rico as we found it: a small, compact little island, inhabited by a proud, independent and somewhat volatile people. For four hundred years they had been the subjects of the most absolute of monarchies. True, certain liberal reforms had been granted, but the opportunity to test their effectiveness had been forestalled by the war, and any speculation as to how they would have worked out is useless.

The ruling class was entirely Spanish out of Spain. That is to say, nearly all governmental posts, civil and military, from that of governor-general down to those of the most minor local officials, were filled by Spaniards, appointed in Spain and sent out from Spain. These formed a stratum of society to themselves. They were for the most part somewhat contemptuous of the creoles. (Used in its original sense, that word denotes persons of Spanish parentage, born in the colonies, and their children, too, without reference to color. In general, the term was applied only to whites.) For the most part the members of this ruling class looked upon their stay in Puerto Rico as a temporary matter. They had no deep-seated affection for the country. They were there primarily to make their fortunes, after which they would retire to their native provinces in the mother country and there spend the remainder of their lives living upon their incomes. This attitude was not discouraged by the home government. Rather, it was looked upon with rather smug complacency, and at home it was considered quite all right for an official, once he had safeguarded the affairs of the Crown, to take what he might get

from the populace in any way he could, short of out and out robbery.

In like manner, much of the business of the island was in Spanish hands. All the great landholders were Spanish. They did not look upon themselves as Puerto Rican. If they had children they sent them to Spain to be educated, where they absorbed the culture and ideology of the old country. In this way they kept themselves aloof and untainted, while the islanders were left largely to their own educative devices. At the time of our occupation there was but one school building upon the island which had been erected solely for the purposes of education. There was not one publicly owned school. Such schools as there were were rented. In a population numbering 322,393 children of school age, but 21,873 were in attendance at school; and by far the greater proportion of these were in the elementary grades. In a population of almost a million, nearly eighty per cent were illiterate.

Courts were conducted along traditional Spanish lines. Cases were heard by a bench of three judges, and trial by jury was unheard of. Indeed, that innovation was looked upon, even by culprits, with considerable suspicion for some time after its introduction.

Nevertheless, despite an administrative setup—or perhaps because of it—which, to an American, would seem intolerable, the great bulk of the people had been content to plod along under Spanish rule, accepting philosophically whatever God might choose to send their way. Only a small minority were acutely dissatisfied, but these, as is the way with minorities, had been more or less organized and were beginning to make themselves heard.

Such was the baby we found on our doorstep the morning after our martial fling. The problem which arose immediately was what were we to do about it?

That there were some whose first impulse was to exploit our new possession is not to be denied. Human nature would not be what it is were this not the case. However, this was not the feeling of the bulk of our people. Nor was it the intention of those responsible for the conquest. There can be no question but that, having behaved

as we had—in the heat of passion, as it were,—our intentions, when we came to formulate them, were strictly honorable. In general the concensus of opinion was that we should take Puerto Rico into the circle of our family and extend to her the same privileges and prerogatives and advantages which we ourselves enjoyed.

But having once settled upon the question of what to do, we were at once faced with another and more complex problem: how were we to do it? The answer to the first was more or less self-evident, but the answer to the second could only be obtained through a process of experiment. Here was a people whose culture and background and entire concept of life were different from ours. How to assimilate them, how to bestow upon them the best of our civilization without destroying all that was good in the old, was the problem with which we were confronted. The story of the forty years, from 1898 to 1938, which followed is the story of the efforts of successive administrations to accomplish this object.

That we have made mistakes is but natural. That progress has at times been painfully slow; that we have yet much to accomplish, cannot be denied. But equally not to be denied is the fact that progress has been made. Those who doubt it can only be asked to look about them at the other lands and islands of the Caribbean area and make their own comparisons.

For nineteen months following the treaty of peace and the transfer of Puerto Rico to the sovereignty of the United States the island was ruled by a military government. During this period much of the groundwork for the future Americanization of Puerto Rico was laid. Such political prisoners of the Spanish regime as remained in prison were released. The insular police force, a force composed entirely of Puerto Ricans, was organized. The freedom of the press and of speech was established, and the postal system was reorganized.

In 1900 Congress passed the bill known as the Foraker Act: "An Act to provide temporarily with revenue and a civil government for the island of Puerto Rico." By the provisions of this act the people of Puerto Rico were declared to be "citizens of Puerto Rico" unless, in accordance with an article of the treaty of peace, they chose to

retain their Spanish citizenship, in which case they were required to register their intention. Exactly 5,320 registered as Spaniards under this provision.

The government which the Act established was to be composed of a governor, appointed by the President of the United States, and a legislative assembly composed of two houses—the executive council and the house of delegates. The Executive Council was to consist of eleven members, five of whom must be native Puerto Ricans. The other six were to be continental Americans, and these six would also act as heads of the six executive departments with the titles: Secretary of Puerto Rico, Attorney General, Auditor of Puerto Rico, Treasurer, Commissioner of the Interior, and Commissioner of Education. All eleven members of the executive council were, like the governor, to be appointed by the President, with the consent and approval of the United States Senate.

In addition to these provisions the Foraker Act provided for a resident commissioner at Washington to be elected by the people. This commissioner was to represent the island in Congress. He might address Congress upon any subject which pertained to the island, but had no vote. Thus, his capacity was—and is—purely advisory.

The Act also provided a revenue for the island by stipulating that all custom house receipts as well as internal revenues should be paid into the insular treasury, to be used for the expenses of the island.

The Foraker Act remained in effect for seventeen years, and though it was a step forward it was not entirely successful. There was considerable dissatisfaction and discontent with a number of its provisions, notably that which denied American citizenship to Puerto Ricans unless they chose to become naturalized.

In 1917 it was superseded by the Organic Act, or, as it is sometimes called, the Jones Act of 1917. This Act extended United States citizenship to all Puerto Ricans. For any who did not care to accept that citizenship it provided that, by appearing before a court and registering their intention, such persons might retain their old status as “citizens of Puerto Rico,” though by so doing they would lose the right to vote as well as their eligibility to public office. Less than

three hundred out of the entire population availed themselves of this privilege.

The Organic Act changed the provisions of the Foraker Act in other ways as well. It replaced the old legislative assembly with the new legislature of Puerto Rico. The powers and duties of the Insular Government, as set up under this act, correspond roughly to those of the various states. The chief differences lie in the functions of the governor. The Jones Act, however, went further than mere administrative reform. In effect it was a constitution for Puerto Rico. It reenacted the Bill of Rights for the benefit of Puerto Ricans, and in addition it provided that all statutory laws of the United States, excepting internal revenue laws and those which might not be applicable locally should have the same force and effect in the island as elsewhere in the United States, unless Congress should provide otherwise. It provided for a judicial setup exactly similar to that existing in the other states and territories. In addition, it provided for manhood suffrage, although it was some time yet before the right to vote was extended to women as well.

This is the Act under which Puerto Rico has been governed for twenty years. It will doubtless be the basis of government for many years to come.

Throughout this recitation of the various administrative adjustments and readjustments which have taken place on the island since the occupation any mention of the people and their reaction has been purposely omitted lest the picture of the actualities be clouded. Although many of the people welcomed us with open arms, it was but natural that our coming was not regarded by everyone as an unmixed blessing. In the years that followed it was to be expected that points of difference making for discontent should arise. Many of these issues died, either naturally or by adjustment. Others remain and will always remain or will be succeeded by others still. Nor is this astonishing. If there was ever a Utopia in which all the people were quite satisfied with everything from the climate to the government, this writer has yet to hear of it.

Puerto Rico has its share of dissension. The island is small and

crowded, so that issues circulate freely and do not lack for support. The people are volatile and vociferous, taking even minor differences to heart for the moment, so that what at first might seem to be a discussion of national import may, upon investigation, prove to be no more than a dispute as to the relative merits of a pair of gamecocks.

This is not to say that there are no issues of importance. Recent labor troubles on the mainland have had their echoes in the island. The battle between the C.I.O. and the A. F. of L. has been as bitter in Puerto Rico as elsewhere. On the matter of North American domination dissension is perennial. Even continental Americans resident in Puerto Rico find it difficult not to be drawn into these discussions and forced to take sides.

The casual visitor to the island, hearing these arguments with their attendant recriminations bandied lightly about, is apt to become bewildered and leap to the conclusion that since the American occupation all has been chaos in Puerto Rico; that since our coming there has been no progress. This is not quite true, as a glance at the record will show.

The population, which in 1898 numbered a little over 900,000 has increased until today it reaches a total of 1,694,820. The birth rate has increased and the death rate fallen off. In 1899 79.6 per cent of the population were illiterates. In 1935 the percentage had been cut to 35.1 per cent. School enrollments have increased. There is still ample room for improvement, yet there is a slow but steady progress which will undoubtedly continue.

In addition to this, sanitation has been vastly improved, the general standard of living has been raised, and transportation facilities greatly extended. Commercially Puerto Rico has advanced by leaps and bounds. In 1937 Puerto Rico was our largest Latin American customer and our sixth largest world customer. At the same time she shipped more goods to us than any other part of Latin America except Cuba. Only seven other countries in the world did a greater export trade with the United States. The figures are eloquent. Here is one field at least in which the occupation has resulted in mutual benefit.

It would be difficult to exaggerate the importance of this external trade in its relation to the economic life of the island. Important as it is, however, there is one activity beside which it becomes relatively insignificant. This is agriculture.

For four hundred years Puerto Rico has lived by agriculture. In those years the products of the soil have been as the very life blood of the island. That they will continue to be so is self-evident. In 1934-35 agricultural products accounted for 79 per cent of all Puerto Rico's exports. According to census figures compiled in 1930, 52.1 per cent of all gainfully employed in the island are directly employed in agriculture. If this figure were to include those indirectly engaged, such as those involved in the processing, packing and shipping of agricultural products and those engaged in the business of supplying agricultural needs, such as farm machinery, fertilizers, etc., the total would be considerably higher. From this it may be seen that, while agriculture and external trade may be said to be, to a certain extent, interdependent, at the same time, insofar as the bulk of the island's population is concerned, at least, agriculture is by far the more important.

Would that this were not quite so completely so! For the heavy dependence upon agriculture gives rise to one of the island's most pressing problems. Figures for the years 1910-1930 indicated that while the population increased nearly 37 per cent the amount of land suitable for crops had actually decreased some 22 per cent! In the five years, 1930-35 the acreage further decreased, leaving, according to the latest figures published by the Department of Agriculture, on this island so utterly dependent upon the soil, .48 of an acre—less than a half an acre!—per person of arable land.

Three factors are directly responsible for this very tangible loss. The hurricane of 1928 destroyed many plantations which have never been replaced and have been allowed to revert to their original wild state. Similarly the collapse of the coffee market and Puerto Rico's subsequent failure to regain her former position as a producer of a small amount of high grade, high-priced coffee, discouraged many coffee growers. Many allowed their groves to grow back to wilder-

ness. But the greatest factor of all in the loss of arable land has been erosion. For repeated centuries Puerto Rico's steep hillsides have been systematically denuded to make way for the cultivation so necessary for the support of her people. The inevitable result has been a steady and increasing washing away of the soil to the sea.

Naturally this situation has not been neglected by the insular and Federal Departments of Agriculture. Projects are afoot today to check the ravages of erosion, to reclaim abandoned acreage, and to reclaim by drainage and irrigation and other methods many acres hitherto regarded as non-arable.

All of these, however, are long-time projects, and while they may in due time accomplish much, their annual progress is likely to be slight. Furthermore they are costly so that it is not possible to carry them out to the full extent of their desirability. As a result the authorities are basing their hopes for more immediate progress upon a program of education designed to induce growers to substitute or supplement low value crops with others, hitherto not grown in the island but having an extremely high money value per acre.

At present the main crops grown in and shipped from Puerto Rico are sugar, coffee, tobacco, pineapples and citrus fruits, such as grapefruit. Of these only sugar and pineapples can be classed as crops having a high money value per acre. Among the lowest money value crops per acre is coffee because of the space required for the trees. Among the crops recently introduced to the island having a high value per acre is vanilla. In some parts of the island vanilla may be grown along with the coffee, thus increasing the coffee growers' yield per acre of land used.

Not for many a day, if ever, has Puerto Rico grown all she needs for food. Far and away the greater part of her food supply must be imported. Once this was a matter of great concern to the authorities. Today, however, they are adopting the point of view that it is more economical for Puerto Rico to import her food and utilize her land resources for high value crops. As Governor Winship puts it in his 1937 report, "Payments to labor for growing an acre of sugar cane will buy from the mainland three or four times as much of the princi-

pal food products used by the people as can be grown upon the same land."

But these are but a part of Puerto Rico's agricultural problem. The situation is so complex that it can only be described by the term "wheels within wheels." Of the 52 per cent of the island's population engaged in agriculture 80 per cent are of the farm labor type earning from 40c to \$1.00 per day. When it is realized that in many cases the period of employment for these workers is but five or six months of the year, some conception of the magnitude of the problem will be gained. Here again the introduction of high value crops will help, for, by increasing the growers' returns from the land, they will enable those growers to pay their labor more adequately.

One of the largest wheels within the agricultural wheel, and one of the greatest bones of contention on the island today, is the sugar industry. Sugar accounts for some 40 per cent of the land in crops. Sugar employs by far the greater percentage of all the labor involved in agriculture, not to mention shipping and processing. It accounts for nearly 70 per cent in value of the island's products. It contributes directly about 40 per cent of all insular and municipal revenues in the form of taxes.

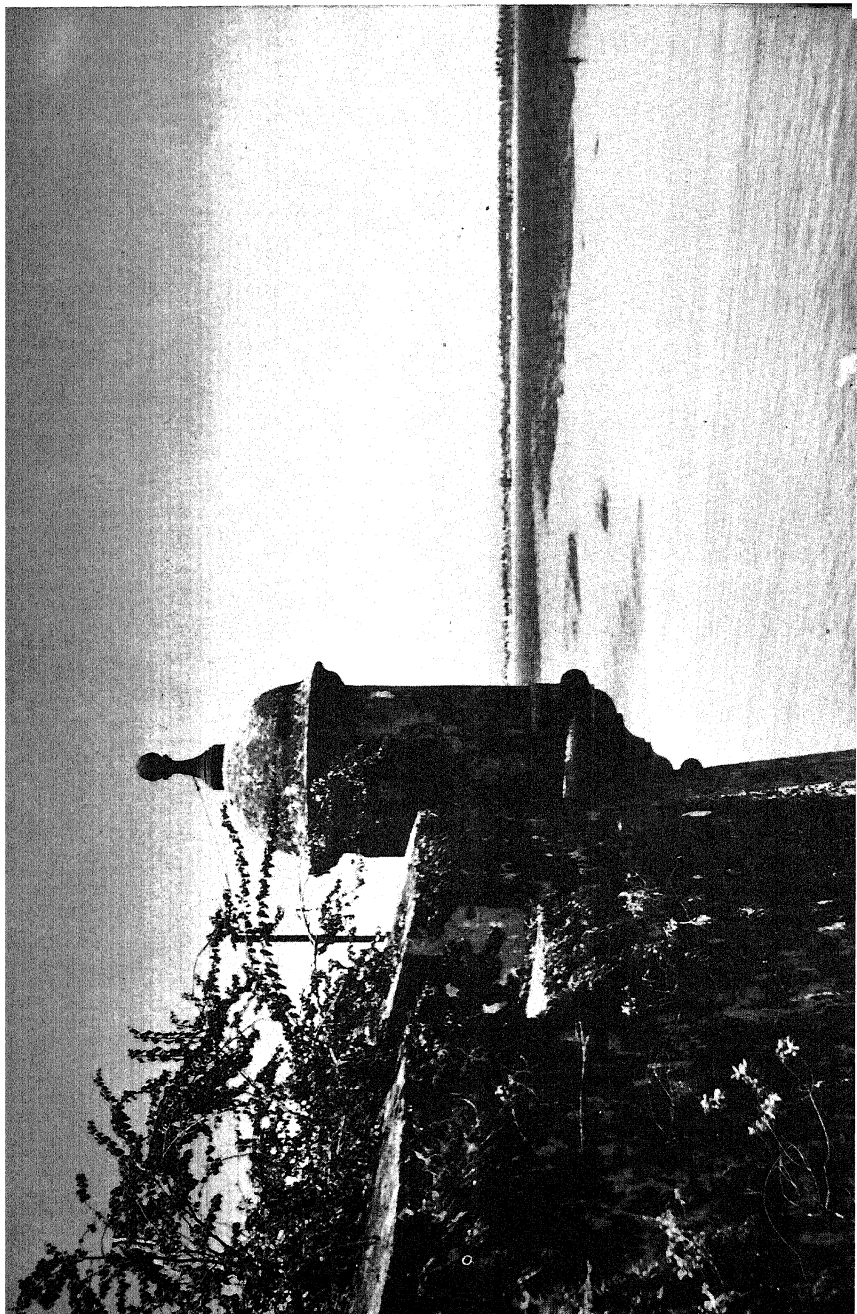
And yet, in spite of this, rightly or wrongly this writer is in no position to say, the industry is not looked upon universally as an unmixed blessing. One hears considerable denouncement of the industry throughout the island. Wages are too low some say. This may be so, but listen again to the words of Governor Winship, quoted from his report of 1937; "Labor on sugar cane plantations in Puerto Rico receives wages comparing favorably, in view of climatic conditions and the eight hour day, with those paid agricultural labor in about one-third of the States. Agricultural labor is covered by workmen's compensation insurance only in Puerto Rico, Hawaii, and New Jersey. By law, wages in Puerto Rico are required to be paid in full legal tender; the work is limited to eight hours a day; and child labor is prohibited." Again, one hears that the industry is controlled by a few large corporations with headquarters on the mainland. This may be true, and it may be an evil: the great corporations

may have outlived their usefulness. Nevertheless, it is safe to say that the sugar industry in Puerto Rico would in all probability never have attained its present position of importance but for the organizing powers of these corporations. One also hears that the industry is taking much money out of Puerto Rico in the form of dividends to stockholders, presumably domiciled for the most part on the mainland. Before any answer can be made definitely to such an accusation it would be necessary to know just how much of the stock in these great companies is held on the island. But even were this true, is it not possible that the benefits accruing to Puerto Rico from the sugar trade more than offset the loss? That conditions within the industry are far from perfect is to be admitted. That the returns have been, in many cases, unfairly distributed; that there have been and are abuses, cannot be denied. But this is not just cause for damning the entire industry. It seems that there is much to be said on both sides.

Sugar is Puerto Rico's great industry, but another business which is growing by leaps and bounds is the tourist trade. Governor Winship, one of the island's most able administrators, has the foresight to promote this aspect of Puerto Rico. He has recognized as essential to the well-being of the island the introduction and encouragement of new sources of income. That explains his deep interest in "tourism." Other governors have recognized the possibilities of this tourist trade, but it remained for Governor Winship to act constructively towards its encouragement. To quote again from the Governor's report of 1937; "For the purpose of developing the tourist business of the island and making its resources and its attractions, as a place of residence and for travel, known to the people of the mainland, the Legislature enacted an act approved by the Governor on May 15, 1937, creating the Institute of Tourism and appropriating four-fifths of the proceeds of a special tax estimated to produce around \$200,000 a year for the purpose of tourist promotion and other related activities.—" Soon after the passage of the act referred to excellent publicity counsel was engaged on the mainland, and an annual carnival was arranged. These were the first steps in what promises to



The sea beats endlessly at San Juan's feet. The tip of El Morro may be faintly seen in the distance.



Ancient sentry boxes still stand guard over San Juan's sea wall.

be a far reaching campaign to make Puerto Rico a center of tourist attraction.

There is no denying what such a trade can do for Puerto Rico. The tourist's demands are simple. He asks no more than that he be comfortably housed, well fed, and adequately entertained. He takes nothing out of the country except a few souvenirs, for which he pays extremely well, to say the least, and a coat of tan. In return for this he brings money from outside and leaves it in the country. He is the modern goose that lays the golden egg, and as such he should be treated with respect. Florida today is an excellent example of what the tourist trade can do for a given region. Bermuda is another.

Neither, on the other hand, is there any question but that Puerto Rico has much to offer the tourist. Cooled by the trade winds in summer, warmed by the tropic sun in winter, it has an extremely equable climate. The record for 1937 may be taken as typical. In that year the year's average temperature was 78.6° . The highest temperature recorded was 92° , the lowest 66° . Another interesting fact recorded in the annual meteorological summary for that year was that there were only four days during the year that were entirely without sunshine.

But climate is not all the island has to offer. With four centuries of Spanish culture behind her she has enough of the historic and the picturesque to satisfy the most exacting lover of the quaint. On the other hand her excellent roads, her up-to-date bustling cities with their plate glass store fronts and trolleys, her enormous sugar centrals will please the most modern. Scenically she offers attractions to please the most jaded traveler. Tropical growth is everywhere abundant; exotic fruits and flowers grow in profusion. Insofar as natural attractions are concerned Puerto Rico would be hard to beat. Puerto Rico has been called, in the flamboyant terms of the publicity expert, "The Paradise of the Atlantic." If, as yet, it falls somewhat short of this description, nevertheless it still has much to offer a visitor with an eye for beauty and an open and inquiring mind.

THE ISLAND—THE RICH PORT

Chapter VIII

“**A**Y, QUE Puerto Rico!”

With these words, uttered in amazed admiration as he rounded the rocky headland and sailed into the calm, unruffled water of that nearly landlocked harbor on the north coast, did Ponce de León unwittingly give the island a name destined to supersede that bestowed upon it by its discoverer. For many years thereafter both the bay and the island city, that rose upon the rocky eminence between it and the sea, bore the name of Puerto Rico de San Juan Bautista. Little by little, however, a change came about. The full name of the city was something of a mouthful. Familiarly men in speaking of it shortened it to a mere San Juan. At the same time, conversely, the name Puerto Rico came to be applied to the entire island. In this way did the city and the island exchange names.

The original name might well have stuck, for truly San Juan is the “Rich Port”—rich in its location between the harbor and the sea, rich in its even, languourous climate, rich in its heritage of Spanish culture and in its associations. Nor can she be considered poor from a more worldly standpoint, for, in point of size, she is the fourth city of the West Indies—if Cuba be excluded she becomes the second, surpassed only by Port au Prince in Haiti—and, thanks to her excellent harbor, she does a thriving trade with the mainland and the outer world. Even today the two terms, Puerto Rico and San Juan, are frequently confused or thought of as synonymous. Nor is this entirely surprising, for it is through San Juan that ninety-five out of a

hundred travelers approach the island, and in many cases it is all they ever see.

Puerto Rico may be approached by a number of different routes. From New York she may be reached in four days on the ships of the New York and Porto Rico Line. From Baltimore the Baltimore Insular Line operates the comfortable S.S. *Barbara*. Coming further down the coast, a cruise service, operating on a schedule calling for a sailing every two weeks, was recently started out of Miami by the Clyde, Mallory Line, though whether this will continue to operate in seasons to come is apparently as yet uncertain. From the Gulf ports, Tampa, Mobile, New Orleans, Lake Charles, Port Arthur and Galveston, the Lykes and Waterman lines operate freight lines capable of handling a limited number of passengers. For those who are in a hurry, or do not like a sea voyage, Puerto Rico may be reached, via the Pan-American Airways, in twenty-one hours from New York, or from Miami in a little over ten hours, three times each week. In addition to these services from the mainland there is regular steamship and air connection with the islands lying to the east and to the west, as well as with the mainland of South America, with Europe and with the Canal Zone. Further combination freight and passenger sailings are occasionally available from other points, for those whose tastes incline to this pleasantly easy going mode of travel. But whatever the route by which the island is approached, unless one comes by air, the chances are ninety-nine in a hundred that the landing will be made at San Juan.

If he comes by one of the larger passenger steamers from the north, the traveler will arrive off Puerto Rico in the small hours of the morning. Unless he is a seasoned voyager, a veteran of many a dawn arrival and bored with the whole business, he will find it well worth his while to have his steward call him in time to be on deck while the ship steams slowly in past the Morro. If he is like the writer, and does not easily grow tired of these things, he will probably be unable to sleep more than fitfully the night before the landing, and will be on deck long before the steward has rolled from his blankets.

In this case it will be dark still when he kicks off the covers for

the last time and decides he may as well dress and go out on deck as lie restless and tossing in the stuffy blackness of the cabin. He takes his time about dressing, for he knows there is no need to hurry. Probably the night before the Chief Officer pointed out the ship's position to him upon the chart posted by the Purser's office, and explained that they would be offshore sometime before dawn, but that they would not enter the harbor before daylight. Indeed, as he shaves he probably tells himself that he would not be rising so early but for the fact that he does not know just how long it might be before day breaks; and he has a slight, though inadmissible suspicion that the steward may have forgotten about calling him. As he dresses he listens unconsciously to the engines. The steady hum that has pervaded the ship from the moment he stepped aboard seems undiminished, but the throbbing thrust of the propellers seems steadier, as though the vessel were moving at reduced speed.

His dressing finished he goes out on deck. The lounge, as he passes through, is deserted, save for a couple of deck boys who have rolled back the big rug and are busy swabbing down the heavy linoleum underneath. They eye him with mingled wonder and scorn as he passes, the idea that anyone might choose to get up at such an hour when he might as well be lying in bed being utterly inconceivable to them.

As he steps out on deck the fresh, cool, salt-laden night air fills his lungs and whips the last musty cobwebs of drowsiness from his mind. If there be a back eddy of air from the mountains ahead, or better still if there be a land breeze, it will carry to him the land smell that is so frequently noticeable at the end of an ocean voyage. I have smelled it off Cape St. Vincent and Gibraltar in the dead of night when the fog was so thick one could not catch the faintest glimmer of the powerful lights at Ceuta and Europa Point and the smell was the only warning we had of the nearness of the land. I have smelled it in the islands of the Aegean and off the West Coast of Africa and in the Pacific and in the Strait of Belle Isle between Labrador and Newfoundland, and always it came at night and had the same sweet, heavy, richness reminiscent of fresh ploughed earth. But in the

West Indies it has a peculiarity of its own, for there it bears also a faint cloying fragrance as of lilies or of tuberoses in the garden when the evening dew is upon them.

The night watchman comes padding on rubber soles, so as not to disturb the passengers, along the deserted deck, swinging his time clock in its leather case. He smiles tolerantly at the traveler and points forward over the rail.

"There she is," he says.

The traveler leans far out over the rail so as to be able to see around the canvas dodger that has been rigged to keep the spray from flying on the promenade and has not been taken down, and looks ahead, following the direction of the pointing finger. Far ahead, bright through the blackness of the night, he can see a long string of lights twinkling at him. At intervals a brighter light flashes a steady warning to mariners. East and west, as far as he can see, these flashing lights gleam like fireflies. Over the main cluster of lights a hazy glow bespeaks the presence of a city beyond. There is nothing more to be seen, save in the east a silvery gray smear of light that is spreading between the black of the sea and the deeper, star-studded black of the sky. For a moment, perhaps, the traveler begins to think of going back to bed, but after an instant's wavering his resolution returns, and he settles himself to wait it out.

Gradually the silver streak in the east widens and spreads across the sky, driving back the darkness and replacing it with the gray light of dawn. Forward, the lights pale and then wink out. Their place is taken by the misty bulk of the island sprawling athwart the course. Nebulous at first, it takes form quickly in the rapidly increasing light. A narrow coastal plain, dotted with regularly-spaced, queer, cone-shaped little hills looks green and fresh after four days of tumbled ocean. Beyond, the land rises in ragged, serrated folds, sear brown in color with here and there a streak or a patch of green to mark a stand of trees. A low hanging bank of clouds presses down upon these slopes in the distance, so that it is impossible to see the top of the mountain backbone which traverses the length of the island. In the foreground the city of San Juan sprawls across its rocky promontory,

crouching behind the ancient battlements that have for centuries withstood both wind and weather and the battering of besieging cannon. The guns that crown these walls are silent now, but the long Atlantic rollers still pound ceaselessly, futilely, at the weedy, moss-grown feet of El Morro and San Cristobal, and seem to send their thunderous bursts of spray among the very hovels of La Perla. To eastward the surf bursts upon the rocks of Escambron Point. And beyond rise the dazzling white towers of Condado's modern apartments.

The ship is gathering speed now, in response to jangled signals from the bridge. Shore details loom rapidly larger. The light grows stronger. In the east, behind a fleecy pile of cumulus the rising sun paints the sky a rosy salmon, and gilds the edges of the clouds. As the ship noses into the choppy channel she seems to be moving at a tremendous rate of speed, but this is probably due more to the presence of a solidly motionless object with which to compare it than to any increase in the actual rate of forward movement. So close overhead that it almost seems possible to reach out and touch them the grim, battle-scarred, weather-streaked walls of the fortress of El Morro slide by, affording the modern observer something of that dwarfing sensation in the stomach that ancient invaders must have felt at the prospect of pitting their feeble endeavors against so much impregnability.

In less than a minute the ship is behind the point and in still water. Off to starboard the surf still breaks upon the tiny island of Cabras, but here there is no more movement, and the ship is steady as a church.

Beyond the Morro the grim walls continue, following the curve of the shore and topped at intervals by squat sentry boxes. Now the city begins to unfold. The white building embowered, if the season be right, in flaming flamboyants and bougainvillea, and fragrant honeysuckle, is the Casablanca—the palace begun as a residence for Ponce de León and now occupied by the commandant of the island's military forces. Just below it and to the right is the ancient water gate. Over the roofs behind the gate may be seen the top of the façade of the cathedral of San Juan Bautista. Still further along the walls looms

the bulk of the Fortaleza, the residence of the governor and once the principal defense of the city.

Beyond the Fortaleza the walls swing sharply eastward, following the contour of the hill, while the ship swings on slowly around a low-lying point housing the district known as La Marina. As this point is rounded the full sweep of the inner harbor and the city bursts upon one; and the traveler's reaction is to exclaim with Ponce de León, "Que Puerto Rico!"—"What a rich port!"

In the harbor itself the water is still as a sheet of bottle-green glass, for the wind has not yet risen to dispel the mists of the morning. Close at hand, in the lee of the point, the white vessels of the coast guard and the lighthouse service lie alongside. Beyond them sprawls the great pink bulk of the Customs House, followed by a busy, open plaza at the landing stage. Still further on is the brownstone Federal Building, housing the Post Office. Behind them all the city crowds in substantial tiers to the summit of the hill. Fussy little ferries ply busily back and forth between the landing stage and Cataño, across the bay. Beyond the landing stage lie the docks.

As the ship noses in towards her berth a dozen small boats cluster around her, their occupants, modestly draped in ragged bathing suits, clamoring to the passengers at her rail to toss them coins for which to dive. This is a refined form of the begging which one will encounter everywhere in Puerto Rico. Nothing less than a nickel will do in this case, however. Pennies are ignored as not worth the labor of going overboard.

Presently another small boat puts out from the dockside, rowed this time by a pair of dusky dockwallopers. As they approach the vessel's bows one of them stands up and waves. In response, a line snakes out from the forecastle and falls athwart their boat. They seize it, and making it fast turn and row hastily back to the wharf. There willing hands take it and begin to haul. The line comes taut and the stout hawser begins to pay out from the ship. As it approaches the dock a half-dozen stevedores reach for it and drag it to the mooring bits. On the forward deck the winch begins to rumble and thump, taking up the slack. On the promenade a gong an-

nounces that breakfast will be served before the passengers are set ashore. We have arrived.

The traveler who would expect to spend a few days, or even a week or two, in Puerto Rico and in that time learn all about it will be doomed to disappointment; for no more in the island than elsewhere in the world can one grow thoroughly familiar with the people and their ways and with all the complexities and problems of their lives in anything short of a protracted stay. And this is as true of the capital city as it is of the island as a whole. How often have we all, after a short visit to a strange city in which we had no acquaintances, gone away with a feeling of distaste, only to return later for a longer stay to make friends with some of the people and revise our opinion?

This is as true of San Juan as it is of any city. Indeed, it might even be accounted somewhat more so, for the Puerto Ricans are of an older culture than our own. Their ideas are not our ideas. In many things they do not think as we do, and he who would understand them thoroughly must first absorb that culture and then learn to think as they think. When he has done this to a certain degree the stranger will have some slight working knowledge of Puerto Rico and the Puertorriqueños from the inside.

In accomplishing this, however, books of travel and description, even books dealing with contemporary problems, will not help him more than a little, for conditions and problems are forever changing, as they must do with any people, and in the long run he must formulate his judgments from his own individual reactions.

But, fortunately for the writers of such books as these, the vast majority of travelers have neither the time nor the inclination for more than externals. They wish to know what there is to be seen and to know something of the story of what they see. They are interested in the history of the people, and they would like to know something of their present life and problems—as much as their time will allow. But they recognize the futility of going deeper. Such as these can be helped immeasurably by their reading, and it is to such as these that this book is addressed. Such travelers, tourists if you

will, with no more than a few days at their disposal to spend in any given locality, will continue to make up the bulk of the traveling public. To complain superciliously that nothing is to be gained by an attenuated visit is nothing short of silly. The tourist, at least, to however slight a degree, has enlarged his horizon by that much.

Luckily for the traveler of this sort, San Juan may be easily seen in one day. The downtown section, which comprises the old city, is compact and may be easily covered on foot by anyone who is reasonably active. Taxis are not cheap by any means, whatever anyone may say to the contrary. But the nearby suburbs are smartly and excellently served by both busses and streetcars—the latter can only be described as “sea-going” in their motion—and the fare by either mode is only a nickel for the round trip.

The stranger, stepping ashore in San Juan for the first time, cannot but be struck by the seemingly chaotic rush of activity which he encounters. Here is none of that sleepy, easy-going, tropical indolence which his imagination may have led him to picture. Rather, here is a busy, modern city going full blast—or, one might almost say, from the hooting and the honking of all description of auto horns, it is a city going double blast! Even before the passengers begin to move ashore the hatches are open and the stevedores are at the cargo. On the wharf electric donkeys, dragging long strings of empty and laden flat trucks clatter back and forth. On the street outside trucks and taxis vie with one another for positions at the wharf head, while through traffic threads its way among them in an endless procession. Pedestrians skip nimbly through the stream. Guides, taxi-men, hotel runners, souvenir venders, elbow one another in an effort to attract the tourists' attention.

The noise is deafening at first, and somewhat bewildering, but one grows used to it in time. Or if one does not become inured to it one at least comes to accept it as an inevitable evil, for the truth is that noise and speed are twin deities to the motoring Puerto Rican. He has even incorporated them into his laws. Ask a Puerto Rican taxi driver why he blows his horn continuously, and he will tell you that the law requires it. He must blow for crossings, intersections,

pedestrians, livestock, parked traffic, curves and corners, oncoming traffic and traffic traveling in the same direction, carts, trucks, autos, busses, schools, churches, hills and bridges. But the truth is he does it because he likes it. In the open country it is not unusual for him to blow his horn at cattle standing on the far side of a stout fence, or to blast into a straightaway with nothing in sight but the empty road, his horn howling from sheer exuberance. In the city it becomes a game of bluff. He puts his hand on the horn and his foot on the gas and forgets about his brakes. He dodges in and out of traffic, riding as frequently on the left as on the right, and lets the other fellow get out of the way. And the amazing thing about it is that one sees no more signs of accidents on the island than one does at home.

The life of old San Juan centers about the Plaza Baldorioty de Castro, or, as it is sometimes called, the Plaza Principal. This stone-paved, tree-lined square lies in the center of the old city, and is easily reached by a short walk from the landing stage—three blocks up the hill along the Calle San Justo from the head of La Marina Plaza, and two blocks left, following the direction of the streetcars, along the Calle Salvador Brau. An alternative route turns left on the Calle Tetuan, backtracking the trolleys, and passing the Church of Santa Ana, built some time prior to 1647, and the Palace Hotel, downtown San Juan's biggest and best. At the next corner beyond the hotel turn right on the Calle Dr. J. C. Barbosa, still following the car tracks, and, in a short block and a half, the Plaza is reached.

By whichever route he may arrive, the stranger, in this short walk, cannot but be struck by a number of characteristics of this ancient city. He will be impressed by the narrowness of these main streets and the orderly way in which traffic is handled under the difficult conditions which result. He cannot fail to remark the contrast of modern shops with plate glass windows overhung with old fashioned Spanish balconies. He will be delighted at the almost non-existent sidewalks, scarce wide enough for two persons to pass, let alone to walk abreast. He will observe with interest the cheerful busyness of the people he meets.

Unless he is more fortunate than most he will have encountered

not a few beggars, and he will see many more in the course of his day's walking. If his previous travels have been confined to the United States he will be appalled at their number. But if he has visited this part of the world before, or if he has traveled in Latin America or the Mediterranean countries, he will be gratefully surprised that they are so few. In self-defense he will soon learn that the only course to adopt toward them is to ignore them, for if one gives the least hint that one is even aware of their presence their persistence is redoubled. And if one gives so much as a penny he is set down as easy prey for all the others.

Even more surprising, to the average American, than the beggars are the lottery venders. Here again, if one has traveled in Spanish-speaking countries, they will be as familiar as lamp-posts on the street corners. But to the tourist from the States they are something new and unfamiliar. Every corner, every other doorway, the entrances to banks and public buildings and even churches, has its vender or two with anywhere from a single soiled and fingermarked section of a ticket to a dozen or more sheaves, which are offered to the passerby by number, as a newsboy hawks his papers. The venders may be anyone from bent old women to blind and crippled men to ragged, barefoot urchins. They cry the numbers of their wares because many of the regular patrons of the lottery, either through superstition or system, buy certain combinations of numbers.

Shortly after our occupation of the island the lottery was abolished. It has since been restored, however, and is conducted, as in all Spanish countries, by the government. There is a monthly drawing for a main prize of \$10,000 and a myriad of lesser prizes ranging all the way down to two or three dollars. Two or three times each year, upon such special occasions as the Fourth of July and New Year's Day, there is a special lottery in which the main prize is \$75,000, the tickets in this last, of course, costing more than those in the regular drawing. Somebody always wins, and the government finds it an excellent source of revenue. The proceeds are turned over to the Insular Department of Health.

Incidentally, it might be said, in passing, that gambling in Puerto

Rico is fully legalized, and anyone who wishes to back his judgment against the wheel or the dice or the cards may find a dozen places where he will be welcome—so long as he has the price of a stack of chips and is willing to abide by the rules of the house.

However, let us return to our sightseeing. The Plaza Baldorioty itself is of external interest only, though it typifies the mixture of ancient and modern which characterizes the city. On the north side rise the twin towers and the arcaded front of the City Hall, or *Alcaldia*, which dates from 1799. The western end is closed off by the old *Intendencia*, now used by the Insular Treasury and Interior Department. The large plate glass windows of a modern department store face the south side, while the east is fronted by a number of smaller shops. The Plaza itself is merely a broad flagged rectangle, fringed about with clipped, well-tended trees. The only architectural decorations which it could be said to contain are two pseudo-Moorish kiosks at the two northern corners. The transit system of San Juan, both trolley and bus, make this spot their deepest point of penetration into the old city, and both circle about two sides of it, entering at the northeast corner and leaving at the southwest. It is a convenient point from which to take either, and to which to return. But first there is the old town to be seen.

A block north from the Plaza Baldorioty, and a block west, fronting on the *Calle de Santo Cristo*, stands the ancient Cathedral of San Juan Bautista. Authority for the building of this church was granted in 1512, and the first building was completed in 1527. None of the original structure remains, however. The oldest parts are said to date from 1646. Most of it dates from 1802, when it was rebuilt after being destroyed by earthquake and hurricane. The newest part, the *façade*, was raised by Bishop Jones in 1912. It is not endowed with special interest as cathedrals go, but it is worthy of a moment's passing attention, for in the south transept lie the remains of the discoverer of Florida and the founder of the island city, Juan Ponce de León. A further item of some slight interest is a glass coffin containing the wax image of a Roman soldier. The image contains some bones and a vial of blood taken from the catacombs in Rome, and

tradition has it that these are the remains of San Pío, a centurion in the legions of Rome and one of the earliest converts to Christianity, martyred for his Faith by Cæsar.

At the top of the Calle San Cristo is the Ponce de León Plaza containing a bronze statue of the old conquistador cast from the guns abandoned by the British at Condado after the siege of 1797. At the north side of the Plaza stands the church of San José, the oldest church in San Juan, and said by some to be the oldest church in continuous use in America. It was built in 1523 by the Dominican Fathers and used by them in connection with the convent which stands next to it. By them it was called Santo Domingo. Some time later the name was changed to San Tomás Aquinas, and this, in turn, was changed to San José in 1858. It was here that the remains of Ponce de León were first laid to rest upon the return of his sorrowing companions from his last fateful expedition to Florida; and it was here they remained for four hundred years until, in 1908, they were removed to their present tomb in the cathedral. The crucifix which rests upon the altar is said to be the very one which the conquistador himself used, and legend has it that it was found upon the rocks below El Morro after the ship which was carrying it away was wrecked. Unfortunately, this building was one of the few which suffered any real damage from the bombardment of the city by Admiral Sampson's fleet in 1898.

Leaving the church of San José and retracing our way down the full length of the Calle Santo Cristo, we come to a tiny building known as the Capillita del Santo Cristo de la Salud—the Little Chapel of the Blessed Christ of Health. This tiny chapel, which is said to be one of the smallest public chapels in the world and dates from the year 1753, is also the subject of a romantic legend.

In the old days, so the story runs, it was the custom, during fiestas, for the young bloods of the town and the surrounding country to gather with their finest horses and run races along the length of the present Calle Santo Cristo from the parapet which tops the massive wall to the present church of San José. On the occasion of one of these festivals one heat had been run and the riders were returning

for a second when the fiery mount of one of the riders became unmanageable and leaped the parapet. Today the roof of the city prison is some feet below this point, but at that time there was nothing but the rocks at the base of the hundred foot wall. Of course all the ladies present screamed and hid their eyes, while the men turned pale and held their breaths listening for the crash below. But one, the Government Secretary, His Excellency General Tomás Prats, who was watching the proceedings from a nearby balcony, leaned forward, and with true Latin fervor, cried out, "Save him, O Blessed Christ of Health!" Whether it was this intercession in the nick of time or no the horse was crushed on the rocks below, but the rider, an "arrogant youth," Baltazar Montañez, escaped without injury. It was in commemoration of this event that the pious general built the chapel.

With this last look at the ecclesiastical side of San Juan, we are free to pass on to more worldly sights. A block back along the Calle Santo Cristo and a block to the left on the Calle Allen brings us face to face with high pink and white front of La Fortaleza. As has already been mentioned this structure, whose name means "the fortress," was originally the first of the fortifications intended to guard the infant city from attack. Begun in 1529, construction, as far as military purposes went, stopped some ten years later when Gonzalo Fernández de Oviedo, sent out from Spain to inspect the work, sneered that "blind men only could have chosen such a place for a fortress!" And the good Gonzalo was right, for though it commanded the landing, which in that day was in the cove below by the San Juan Gate, it could not keep an enemy fleet from sailing right into the harbor.

Fernandez returned to Spain and recommended that a fortress be built at El Morro. It was some time before this recommendation could be carried out in its entirety. Nevertheless, it was from that date that La Fortaleza ceased to be the fortress, and became instead the residence. At first it was the residence of the military commanders, while the governor's residence continued to be the Casablanca. In 1625, however, it was partially burned by the Dutch. In 1639 it was rebuilt, this time to serve as the official residence of the governor. Contemporary prints show that at the completion of this reconstruc-

tion the building looked very much as it does today. No further work was done on it, aside from necessary repairs, according to the record, until 1846 when certain rooms were added and certain architectural changes made. It is from this time that the façade which rises before us as we approach it along the Calle Allen probably dates. The older parts of the building lie beyond.

The full name of the building is "La Real Fortaleza de Santa Catalina." Originally, below the fort and on the site of the present wall, stood the little chapel of Santa Catalina, in which was kept the image of Santiago, the patron Saint of the Indies. In 1641 it became necessary to tear down this chapel to make way for the walls. Such was the reverence of the inhabitants for the chapel, however, that it was rebuilt later inside the walls of La Fortaleza at the top of the very wall whose construction had forced its demolition. It is from this tiny chapel within its walls that the residence takes its name.

Much of the building today is occupied by the governor's private quarters, and as such is, quite naturally, not open to the public. Some of the public rooms, however, may be visited.

Far more interesting than the building itself, at least to my mind, are the gardens which lie between it and the San Juan Gate and crown the top of the old wall. These are open to the public and may be reached either through the building or along the wall itself. Here, amid a riot of tropical foliage, there is a tranquil spot away from the heat and scurry and bustle of the city beyond. Even the noises of the town do not seem to penetrate its stillness. Along the walk atop the wall hibiscus and oleander and poinciana and frangipani and poinsettia and a host of other less easily recognized flowering plants and shrubs mingle with the palms and creepers. Red and purple bougainvillea and honeysuckle and a kind of red trumpet vine sprawl in a mass of color across the ancient ramparts, all but obliterating the ancient sentry boxes. For the most part the embrasures in the thick masonry of the walls stand empty, but here and there an ancient cannon still frowns impotently down upon the placid waters of the harbor below.

At the end of the walk one passes through an ancient hand-carved mahogany gate. To the right steps lead down to the old San Juan

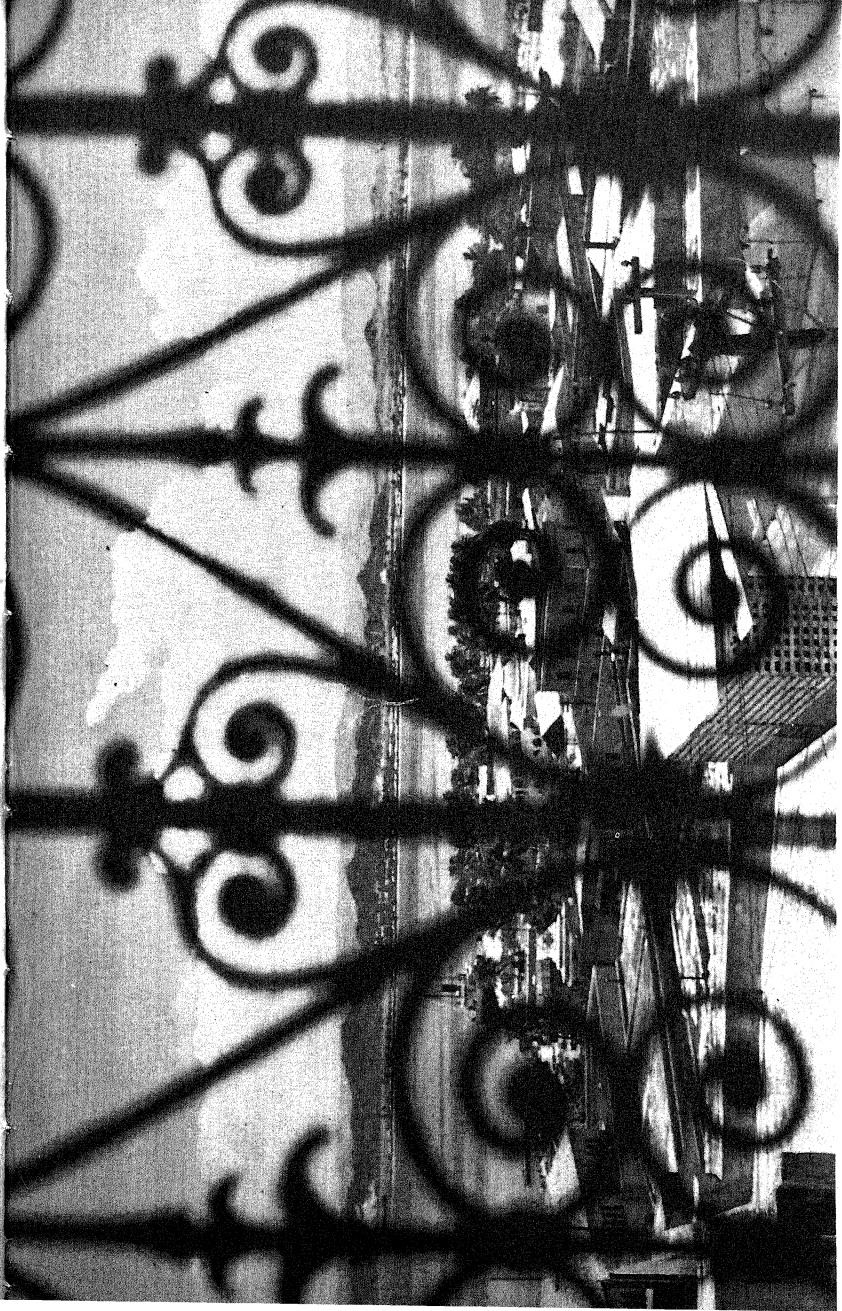
Gate, the only one of the ancient city gates still standing. A paved roadway passes through and turning sharply hugs the base of the old wall around to the left, coming out on the Paseo de la Princesa, leading to the present landing stage. But the ancient landing place was here at this gateway. Here Ponce de León landed to mark out the site of the new settlement. Here successive governors of the ancient regime first set foot ashore when they arrived from Spain. Here the treasure of the plate fleet was landed for storage behind the thick walls of La Fortaleza on the eve of Drake's attack. Here the Dutch embarked once more upon their ships of war after burning most of the city in 1625.

The district immediately back of this gate, within the walls, then, was the site of the original settlement, and it is still the oldest part of the city. Thick-walled Spanish houses, built of tamped earth as were so many of the old buildings of the city, with street doors flush with the sidewalks and grilled iron balconies jutting out above, line the Caleta de San Juan, leading up to the cathedral from the gate, and the Caleta de las Monjas which parallels the inside of the wall.

Proceeding on around the walls beyond La Fortaleza we come next to the Casablanca, for a hundred years after his death the property of the descendants of Ponce de León, and now the property of the United States Government. Today it is the residence of the commander of the island's military forces, and as such is not open to public inspection. We may, however, admire it from without, and wander freely in the gardens that extend between it and the sea wall and which are more extensive than those about La Fortaleza. We must not linger too long, however, pleasant though the gardens be, for there is yet much to be seen, and the day is short.

A short climb up the hill between the Casablanca and the gardens brings us out upon the spotlessly well-tended grounds of the army post. Right and left are the modern, rather uninteresting, quarters of the officers of the Sixty-fifth Regiment of Infantry, the only American troops on the island, and, incidentally, composed entirely except for commissioned officers, of Puerto Ricans.

From the officers' quarters a broad, straight highway leads up a



Grilled balconies overlook the harbor of San Juan and the roofs of the lower town.



La Perla—The Pearl—is the name some grim jester once bestowed

slight incline across a wide open space that might once have been a parade but which now serves as a golf course for the officers and their guests. At the end of the broad highway an ancient viaduct, complete with drawbridge, spans the now dry moat to the entrance gate of the fortress of El Morro. Crossing the bridge into the old fort one cannot but wonder if the moat were ever filled with water pumped laboriously from below. But whether or not it was ever filled, it must have served its purpose in the scheme of defense, for the record shows that more than once the fortress was besieged from this side. Today there are concrete tennis courts and a basketball court in the moat, as well as at least one of the greens for the golf course, thus making it one of the hazards of the game. The officers' golf might also be termed one of the hazards of the tourist's game, for a slight miscalculation may, and sometimes does, place the ball squarely on the bridge.

There is no need here to repeat the chronicle of all the sieges which this ancient fortress has withstood. Mention has already been made of the principal attacks. Construction was begun upon it in 1539, at the recommendation of Gonzalo Fernandez, but the work went forward with heartbreaking slowness due to lack of both funds and manpower. By 1555 only eight bronze cannon had been mounted on the ramparts commanding the entrance to the harbor. During this time petitions to Spain for more slaves and more gold with which to carry on the work were frequent. It is said that one of these complained bitterly that all the negro slaves who had been sent out to work upon the fortifications had died of old age! That funds were not lacking, too, is evidenced by the legend that tells of the caustic rejoinder of the King of Spain when, upon being discovered by some of his courtiers while on a visit to Cadiz gazing pensively out to sea, he was asked the reason why.

"I am trying to see the walls of El Morro de San Juan," he replied. "With the amount of money I have poured into them they should be by now quite high enough to see from here."

1606 was the official date of the completion of the work, but so long as it remained in active use such a tremendous project was never

complete. No sooner was it done than there were repairs to make or various forms of modernization to be undertaken. In all the years it remained in Spanish hands it was never finished. Neither was it ever adequately armed or garrisoned. In its last bombardment it suffered but little damage. Only a few nicks, so to speak, in the hoary, mosscovered old walls show where Admiral Sampson's shots took effect. In 1917 the last hostile shot was fired from its walls. At the time of the United States' declaration of war on Germany, so the story goes, there was one German ship in the harbor, which tried to make a run for the open sea and safety. There was only one old gun on the Morro which could be fired, and this was loaded, aimed with some difficulty, and touched off. The shot, landing ahead of the ship, sent up a warning geyser of spray, but the old gun was torn from its emplacement by the recoil and rolled over out of sight. The Germans, thinking they had been fired upon by a modern disappearing type of gun, heeded the warning and put back docilely into the harbor.

Today the old fort is as obsolete as the gun which fired the final shot from its walls. Its only use now is as a landmark, an interesting relic and monument to a bygone era. But for this it deserves to be and is being preserved.

A company of the Sixty-fifth is kept in quarters here, and several of its members are constantly on duty at the gate to show visitors around. They are pleasant spoken, courteous lads who know their duty and are proud to do it well. They will show the visitor cheerfully every level of the five which make up the old fortress, from the topmost down to the very lowest close by the water's edge. They will lead him through musty crumbling corridors, down dark, worn flights of steps, to ancient cavernous dungeons, and hidden embrasures which cannot be seen from the outside. They will point out where tunnels, long since bricked up, once led to San Cristobal and the San Juan Gate, and they point out the bullet-scarred wall where once prisoners were executed. Above, just off the inner court, they show with evident pride the quarters that are reserved for them and the little chapel which is theirs. These are the modern occupants of El

Morro. As one waves good-bye at the gate and starts back down the long hill one cannot help but wonder if they are ever troubled by the ghosts of the old defenders.

Dropping down off the golf course-parade, one should bear to the left, past the officers' quarters once more, then past the great yellow sprawling Ballaja barracks, which in days gone by housed the soldiers of Spain and which today perform the same service for our own soldiers of the Sixty-fifth.

Down behind the Ballaja barracks, on the sea side of the wall, is the old San Juan Cemetery, where the dead lie with the thunder of the Atlantic surf in their ears. On the other side of the barracks is the open-air market, and beyond that again, along Del Valle Boulevard, which is the high-sounding name of the squalid, outermost street along the top of the walls, we may look over and down at the slaughterhouse surrounded by the slatternly roofs of the slum of La Perla.

La Perla! The Pearl! What bitter irony ever gave it that name? With its rickety hovels clinging for a bare toehold upon the narrow strip of solid land between the foot of the wall and the Atlantic breakers, this miserable district, for all its filth and squalor, has a certain picturesque quality that speaks eloquently of a passing era. La Perla exists today, though as human habitation it is as obsolete as the two mighty fortresses between which it nestles. Unlike its neighbors, however, it will not remain a monument to the past. Soon it will be torn down, for its presence is a menace to the health and safety of the city. Puerto Rico is unfortunate in the number and squalor of her slums. She is fortunate, on the other hand, in the efficient organization of her PRRA (Puerto Rico Reconstruction Administration), for under it the work of slum clearance and the replacement of such districts with modern housing developments is going forward rapidly.

The row of modern buildings and apartments that tops the bluff behind La Perla and runs eastward to the walls of San Cristobal is in sharp contrast to its flimsy, slovenly, sordid neighbor under the hill. And this sense of contrast is heightened by the thick, massive walls of the mighty fortress of San Cristobal which rises just beyond.

San Cristobal is a hundred years and more younger than its sister fortress on the point, though one would never guess it to look upon its mosscovered, weatherbeaten walls. As early as 1521 some sort of fortification at this point was authorized, and it was logical that it should be so, for this is the highest spot on this side of the harbor, and it is ideally suited for defense. Probably a fort of some kind was maintained here throughout the sixteenth century. Construction upon it, however, was not begun until El Morro was complete.

This fact is an enlightening commentary upon the conditions of the day. The grants of money made for the fortification were doubtless intended for the entire system. Those locally in control, however, looked at the matter differently. During the first century of the colony's existence the danger of attack was mostly from isolated rovers or small fleets which must attempt to force the harbor. In the beginning, the possibility of an enemy landing up the coast and attacking overland must have been remote; or, if there were the possibility, the authorities must have had confidence in their own ability to stand the invaders off at the San Antonio bridge.

So, despite the fact that its construction was authorized, work upon the ramparts of San Cristobal was postponed until the front door had been made secure. But no sooner was this accomplished than the builders awoke to the realization that while they had been building, the art of war had so changed that they had their work to do over again. El Morro was officially completed in 1606. Less than twenty years later a Dutch fleet forced its way into the harbor and landed a strong force, which, though it failed to take the city, came close enough to it to give the Spaniards the scare of their lives, and which succeeded in burning a good portion of it.

After this it was determined that a fortress would be built which would dominate the entire island upon which the city stood and which would be impregnable in the event of a land attack. This fortress would also dominate the harbor, making it untenable for any enemy fleet which might, by any freak of chance, force its way past the batteries of El Morro.

Construction was begun upon San Cristobal and the city walls in

1631. As was the case with El Morro it was a long and seemingly endless task. Fortunately there were no serious interruptions. In 1765, more than a century after the work was begun, Marshal Alejandro O'Reilly was sent out from Spain to make a survey of the island's defenses. His report showed them to be inadequate. Possibly the British heard of this, for in 1768 they again appeared in force off the city.

Insufficient though they might have been, the fortifications must have presented a formidable appearance from the outside, for the British sailed away again after no more than a half-hearted effort at attack.

It is a fact, not frequently recalled by many, that during our own Revolutionary War with Great Britain, Spain, as well as France, was our ally. During this period the home government evidently feared another English attack, for Colonel Tomás O'Daly, of the Royal Engineers, was sent out to direct the reconstruction and enlargement of the fortifications. It was during this period that San Cristobal, as it stands today, was completed.

The anticipated attack by the British did not materialize, however, and Colonel O'Daly returned to Spain in 1783. In the attack of 1797 San Cristobal played an important part in the repulse of the British. Not for a year and a century after that was there to be another attack by a foreign power. Then, on May 10, 1898, the Caballero battery on San Cristobal fired the opening shot of the Spanish-American War on Puerto Rican soil upon the American scout cruiser *Yale*, which was seen hovering far offshore, searching for signs of Admiral Cervera's fleet. It was not until some days later that Admiral Sampson bombarded the city from the sea.

San Cristobal is larger, even more massive and more interesting from a military point of view, than El Morro. But because of its less dramatic situation it commands less attention from tourists and other visitors. True, it dominates the city as seen from the harbor as well as from the east and south, but from the older part of the city, to the westward, it is, by contrast with the modern buildings, less imposing.

It has its share of legend, too. Most familiar of these is that dealing with the "haunted sentry box" which overhangs the sea at the lowest level of the ramparts. According to this one, a sentry on duty at that point suddenly disappeared one night, leaving both uniform and equipment behind. Some stories have it that he disappeared in "a flash of fire and a puff of brimstone." Others play it safe and relate simply that he disappeared. "A sheer drop of one hundred feet to the water below made escape impossible in that direction," runs the account. "Unable to reach an explanation, the disappearance was considered to be the work of His Satanic Majesty."

Picturesque as the story is, there seems to be a more prosaic explanation. Upon closer inspection the drop from the wall at that point proves to be nearer thirty than one hundred feet. It seems probable that the soldier in question simply deserted, leaving his equipment so that he might not be traced by it. It is said that he was discovered some years later living peacefully on a farm near Caguas.

San Cristobal today also houses a company of the Sixty-fifth. Unlike El Morro, however, it is not open to the public except by special permit.

The old city wall once ran down from San Cristobal to the Plaza Colon below, with its magnificent statue of Columbus, and thence swung westward to join the other ramparts at the Marina. In 1797, however, this section was torn down to make way for the eastward expansion of the city. Today the broad Avenida Ponce de León leads outward from the Plaza Colon, through the newer section of the city to the suburbs of Miramar and Santurce. Both the busses and the streetcars pass through the Plaza, and it is a convenient place from which to catch either.

Beyond the bridge which crosses the inlet separating San Juan from the mainland the trolley is perhaps the most satisfactory mode of sightseeing, because of the loop which it makes. The first part of the ride, however, from the Plaza to the bridge, is better seen from the bus. Accordingly we will catch a bus from the south side of the Plaza, in front of the Municipal Theatre. Any bus will do for our

purposes, and it is safe to say that the chances are ten to one we will not have to wait as long for one as we would on Fifth Avenue in New York.

As the bus swings out of the Plaza our attention is drawn to a row of imposing modern buildings, each one different, yet each of a style adapted to their location and the climate. The first of these, diagonally across from the Municipal Theatre, is the Casino de Puerto Rico, said to be one of the most exclusive clubs on the island. Next is the Y. M. C. A., said to be somewhat less exclusive. Beyond this are the Atheneum, sponsor of Puerto Rican Arts and Letters, and the Carnegie Library, a public institution with an excellent collection of books in both Spanish and English. Next, the neo-Moorish building with the blue and white tile roof is the Casa de España, home of the Spanish Club and the social center of the Spanish—as opposed to Puerto Rican—group, which despite forty years of American domination, is still strong on the island.

There is no need to say what the Capitol Building, standing next beyond the Casa de España in the midst of carefully landscaped grounds, is copied after. The fact is obvious that, like the capitols of so many of the states, it apes the Capitol at Washington. I have heard Puerto Ricans speak of it somewhat bitterly as “our million dollar white elephant.” The exact cost of the building has not been published, though amateur estimates run as high as forty million. More likely the actual cost was somewhere between three and four million. It has never been completed inside, however, though it is used by the insular legislature for the purpose for which it was built. Undeniably it is a beautiful structure, yet there is something incongruous about it in this tropic setting. It is unfortunate that something more appropriate to the location could not have been worked out beforehand and misdirected patriotism, however well meant, set aside. Regrets now are vain, however, for the building was constructed, externally at least, as if it were meant to last forever and a day.

In striking contrast to the incongruity of the Capitol is the School of Tropical Medicine just beyond. This graceful and attractive

building, with its tiled roof and medallions and arcaded balconies and pleasantly-blended colors, has for its architectural model the Palace of Monterrey in Salamanca. The school is staffed and operated jointly by Columbia University and the University of Puerto Rico, and collaborates with the Insular Department of Health through the University Hospital. It is the only school of its kind in the Caribbean area, and it rivals closely in importance the famous School of Tropical Medicine in London. It is dedicated to the scientific study of tropical diseases, and under its auspices important strides in this field have been made.

Beyond the School of Tropical Medicine stands the United States Weather Bureau, an important link in our forecasting system, for many "tropical disturbances" take their rise in the region lying just to the eastward of Puerto Rico.

After passing the Weather Bureau we ride through a thickly settled, somewhat industrial section. Here we see, on the right, the large factory of the Puerto Rican-American Tobacco Company, which controls most of Puerto Rico's cigar and cigarette manufacture. Just beyond this, again, we come to Munoz Rivera Park. Here, in what was once the old Escambron powder magazine, is the Museum of Natural History. Here too are the headquarters of the PRRA.

At the end of the park we will leave the bus and walk along the broad avenue which leads past the entrance to the PRRA grounds. At the ball park—baseball is an exceedingly popular game in the island—bear to the right. A hundred yards or so beyond, at the end of the street, we come to the Escambron Beach Club.

Despite the fact that it is called a club, this institution is open to the public, and serves as a seaside resort, offering dining, dancing, bathing and gaming tables as well as hotel accommodations for visitors. The huge casino fronts upon a small cove which has been fenced off at its mouth against the roving tendencies of such sea monsters as sharks and barracuda, which, whether it be admitted or no, constitute a real hazard to bathers in the waters about the island. Wings extend from the casino containing bathhouses, and at the end of these wings are the living accommodations; that at the southern end being com-

posed of apartments, while that at the northern end, overlooking the Atlantic and sufficiently remote so that no sound save that of the breakers disturbs its tranquillity, contains the hotel section. This, beyond question, is one of the most pleasant places in San Juan to stay.

Retracing our steps to the Avenida Ponce de León, we may resume our journey, either by bus or by streetcar. A little beyond the stop at which we board the car the track splits. At certain hours of the day the cars bear left at this point passing through Condado, as the section between the lagoon of the same name and the ocean is called, and returning by a long loop through Santurce and Miramar. At other times the cars continue straight ahead, paralleling the Avenida Ponce de León, and pass in the reverse order through Miramar and Santurce, returning through Condado. As the hours at which these different schedules are maintained are subject to a certain amount of fluctuation, it is not always possible to tell just which way the cars will go. But in the end the effect is the same.

Assuming, however, that they bear left at this moment, we cross the Condado bridge. Jutting out into the inlet, far to the left, may be seen the tiny fort of San Geronimo, the smallest and outermost of San Juan's ring of defenses. Today his tiny fort serves as a private residence and so is not open to the public.

Beyond we climb abruptly into the suburb of Condado and parallel the Avenue Dr. Bailey K. Ashford, named for the discoverer of the hookworm, once the greatest plague of the island. Here all about us is evidence of an extensive building boom, indicative of the fact that capital has already, to a certain extent, interested itself in this promising island. It has been said that until recently many of the wealthy Spanish families of the island were in the habit of sending their money to Spain for investment. Recently, however, because of the war in Spain, this has been impossible, and the money which was thus sent out of the island is today being spent on building.

Midway of Condado we pass, standing between the lagoon and the ocean, the large Condado Hotel. This hotel, originally called the Condado-Vanderbilt, is the only really modern, first-class hotel upon the island, and, with the Escambron Beach Club, is the only place on

the island where the particular tourist will find the sort of accommodation to which he is accustomed. This is a sad fact, but an incontrovertible one.

Beyond the Condado Hotel there is little of particular interest. Condado itself, and Santurce and Miramar, are but tropical editions of a modern suburb. One sees houses and bungalows of all sorts and sizes and descriptions, some attractive, some hideous monstrosities. Apartments vary no less than private residences. Some are rococo, some are modernistic, some are pleasantly plain and suited to their surroundings. Hospitals abound, public and private, to such an extent that it seems unbelievable that anyone could be ill for an instant in the island without being carted off to one. Back on the Avenida Ponce de León are the local shops and cinemas and the great brown Central High School with its great Doric columns, rather resembling some enormous museum than a school building.

As we swing back to Miramar the evening sun will be sinking low in the west, and the tide of business people coming from their offices and places of labor in the downtown section to their homes in the suburbs will be at its height, just as it would be at home at the same hour. After such a day's sightseeing it will be understandable if we are hungry and a little tired.

Drop off then at the last stop in Miramar, just before the car crosses the bridge which separates it from the city. Before us, on the uphill corner, stands the Union Club, whose dining room is open to the public, and where all who know their San Juan agree that the best meals at the most reasonable prices are served. This is a fact which everyone who spends much time in San Juan soon learns, and for us it may as well be sooner as later.

It is pleasant and peaceful on the open-air dining porch. As we give our order and relax comfortably the evening train from Mayaguez gives its squeaky whistle a block away and chuffs busily into view. Out of the eye of the setting sun, far down across the harbor, one of the great clipper ships of the Pan American Airways appears and settles lightly as a feather upon the water, taxiing a moment later, like some great angry goose, to the airport beyond our range of vision.

Below us, on the Avenido Ponce de León, the rush hour traffic growls and rumbles across the San Antonio bridge at the very spot where a hundred years and more ago San Juan's defenders beat off the last determined British attack. Looking down upon the scene we cannot help but wonder what those gallant warriors would think of their city, for which they fought so desperately, if they could but see it today.

THE ISLAND—IN THE SHADOW OF EL YUNQUE

Chapter IX

AT THE time of the American occupation Puerto Rico had about one hundred and sixty miles of what could be classed as improved road. At the same time there was a narrow gauge railway, built by a French concession, extending from the town of Carolina, a short distance east of San Juan, around the coast to Mayaguez at the western end of the island. Another short stretch of track extended from Ponce westward to Yauco. Elsewhere the only means of communication between towns was by foot or horseback, by mule or ox-cart, over stony trails and foot-paths and what New England today calls "dirt roads."

This is not to say that the island was backward in her transportation system. On the contrary, considering the time and her location, she was actually advanced. No other island in the West Indies, with the exception of Cuba, could boast such a highway as the famous Carretera Militar, the Military Road, extending diagonally across the island, a distance of eighty-one miles, from San Juan to Ponce. Indeed, this highway, hard-paved throughout its length, with stone bridges and maintenance posts at frequent intervals, might at that time have been ranked with the world's best. True, by modern standards it was narrow, the sharp curves and the bridges with their low parapets were dangerous, and it was rather more winding than was necessary; but it must be remembered that it was built for the easy movement of troops from one side of the island to the other rather than for the high speeds of today. Puerto Rico's roads still

wind. As an acquaintance puts it they are "crooked enough to break a snake's back," but this is due to the exigencies of the terrain rather than to any fault of the builders. Steep mountain slopes, deeply gullied by arroyos and barrancas, sharp ridges that extend in all directions, deep, narrow, winding valleys that terminate in abrupt headwalls, are the rule rather than the exception. They make for wild and rugged beauty, for sweeping vistas and for breath taking magnificence of scenery, but they do not simplify the lot of the highway engineer.

Puerto Rico today has nearly fifteen hundred miles of first class paved road. The railway has been extended eastward from Carolina through Fajardo at the eastern end of the island and around to Humacao on the southeast. From Mayaguez it continues on through Ponce to Guayama, leaving only the fifty-mile gap between Guayama and Humacao to break the complete circuit of the island. In addition a veritable network of branch lines and feeders serves the extensive cane fields and the great sugar centrals. Nobody walks in Puerto Rico today for more than short distances.

As a means of transport for other than freight, however, the railroad is not to be recommended. It is tediously slow and comparatively expensive. The most popular, as well as the cheapest, means of getting about is by means of public cars, or "guaguas," as they are called. These may be anything from a twenty-passenger bus to a ramshackle touring car in the final stages of decrepitude. By far the greater proportion of them, however, are five-passenger sedans, of surprisingly recent vintage, or station wagons accommodating seven or eight. Large busses are uncommon, and are encountered on only a few runs between some of the larger towns.

Many of these cars are owner driven on local runs. Some are operated in fleets on somewhat more extended trips. All of them carry their destination and usually their point of origin and sometimes their route written in large letters in soap upon the windshield. On the longer runs, such as San Juan-Ponce, San Juan-Arecibo, or San Juan-Mayaguez, they make their departures on a fixed schedule, while those on the shorter runs appear to leave and arrive pretty much as

the spirit moves and passengers demand. There is not a point on the island they do not reach, and there is scarcely a road on which they do not make up about sixty per cent or more of the traffic, so that if one is missed it is no matter: there will be another along in a minute or two. If the accommodations which one finds in the various towns scattered about the island were only passable, this would be the ideal haphazard way to see the country. One might get on and off at will, going where the spirit moved, and stopping where night overtook. One could not be squeamish, for they take whatever passengers offer, and they pack them in, as many as the car will hold. But their rates are absurdly low. And if one is neither a prude nor a timid soul—for the drivers are wild men—they are great fun.

Accommodations being what they are, however, this is hardly feasible. The traveler who likes his comfort must have his destination mapped out beforehand. Also, unless one's Spanish is fluent, one may have difficulty making one's self understood, for Spanish is the language of the people everywhere, and though there is always someone about who speaks English after a fashion it may be some time before he can be located. On the longer runs these difficulties are obviated to some degree, but one is whisked across the countryside at high speed without the privilege of stopping where he wills, so that much that is of interest is bound to be missed.

I do not mean by this that the haphazard method of seeing the island is out of the question. Adventurous youngsters with slim purses and a full measure of appreciation, who can put up with anything in the way of food and overnight lodging, and who will travel light, will find it an excellent way to see the island. However, it is not for most.

Of late several of the steamship companies plying to the island have offered attractive rates to those who might wish to bring their own cars. For those who plan a protracted stay on the island there is a decided advantage in having one's own means of transport always at hand. For those who plan to stay a few weeks at the most, however, the expense is prohibitive. For what it costs to ship one's car down and back one may, by means of a little bargaining (and one

should always bargain; it is expected) hire a car and driver to be always at one's disposal for ten days to two weeks, which is ample time to cover the island from end to end several times. For those who can afford it this is the ideal way of getting about, for one may plan the destination beforehand. One may go there by whatever route he chooses. And one may stop or rest where one will. It goes without saying that careful inquiry should be made as to the integrity and ability of the driver before entering into any contract.

One of the most easily accessible sections of the island for a day's trip, as well as one of the most interesting, is the east end, which includes, among other things, the parklike preserve of the Luquillo Unit of the Caribbean National Forest. A day which promises to be bright and clear should be chosen for this excursion, and an early start should be made, for it is best to reach the recreation area, high in the mountains, at a time when the clouds have lifted and the outlook is at its best. This is not always easy to judge from below, for rain, in those altitudes is the rule rather than the exception, and the rain clouds rise and fall upon the peaks with bewildering rapidity.

The way lies outward through those same sections which we traversed yesterday by streetcar. If time permits it is worth while to make an aside through Condado to the Boca de Cangrejos.

Boca de Cangrejos—the name, translated, means “Crab Inlet”—is a pretty little cove ringed by a white sand beach over which the fronds of the coconut palms nod gently in the sea breeze. Offshore a long series of coral reefs breaks the fury of the pounding surf, and the waters of the little inlet behind are always calm. Behind this reef, and beneath the tranquil, blue-green waters of the cove, are San Juan's famed undersea gardens. Drifting over them in a glass-bottomed boat one may look down and see, covering the ocean floor, a weirdly lovely submarine display. Amid the jagged masses of coral rock purple sea fans and all manner of strange undersea vegetation sway, now this way, now that, in the ceaseless currents. Spiny sea eggs, great and small, both white and black, nestle amid the cracks and fissures. Pronghorn and basin coral reach grotesque arms upward like some species of underwater cactus. And through it all drift

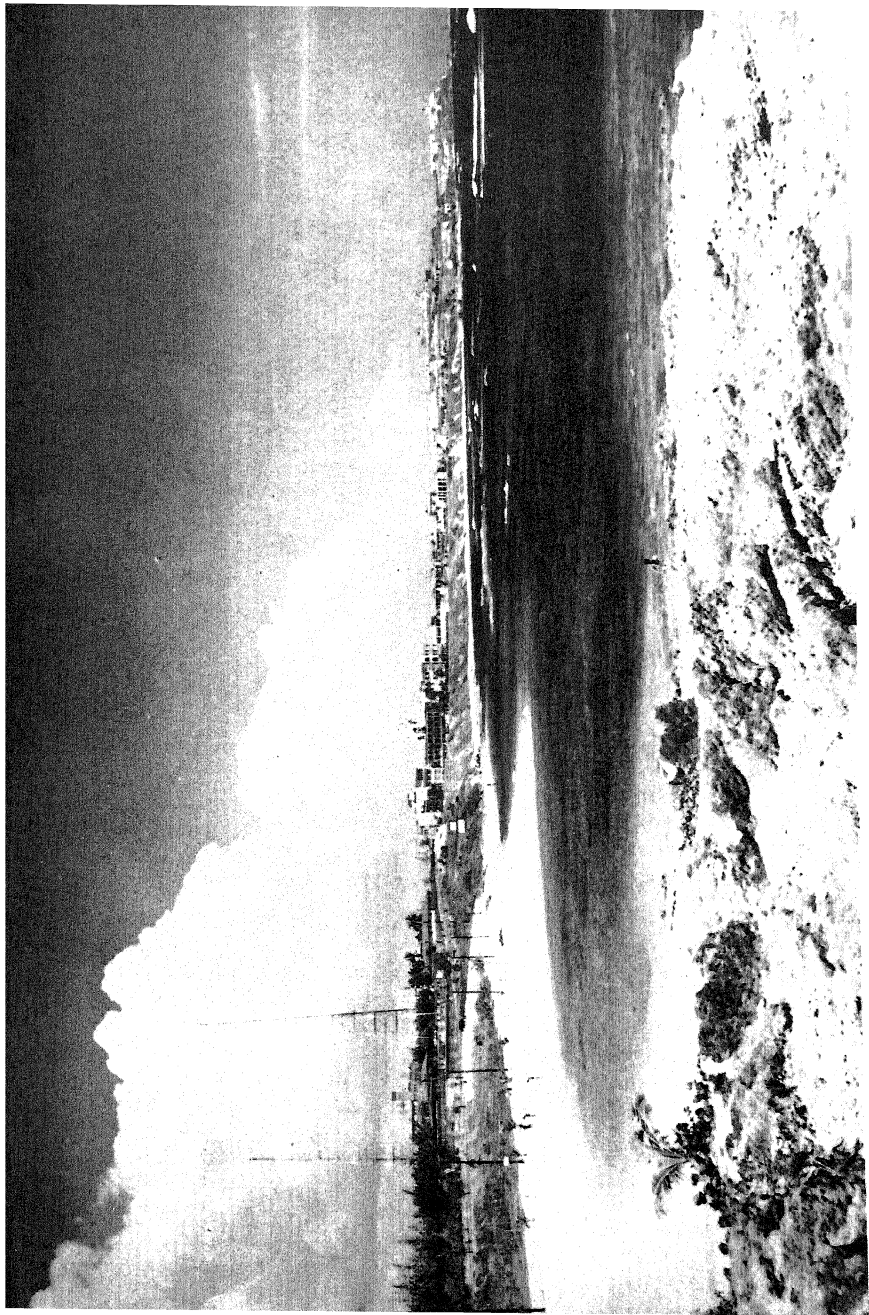
schools of brilliantly colored fish: bright black and yellow sergeant-majors, black and blue angel fish, vivid parrotfish, red and gray snappers, ghostly, silvery moonfish or look-down, and now and then a spotted green and yellow moray winding himself snakelike about some outcropping in the rocks.

All this may be seen in comfort and with a minimum of excitement from a boat. For those hardy souls who crave adventure, however, and who wish to see things from an unconventional angle, individual diving helmets can be rented for a small sum. So tame are the fish which abound here, it is said, that they will eat out of one's hand, though I confess I never put the matter to a test.

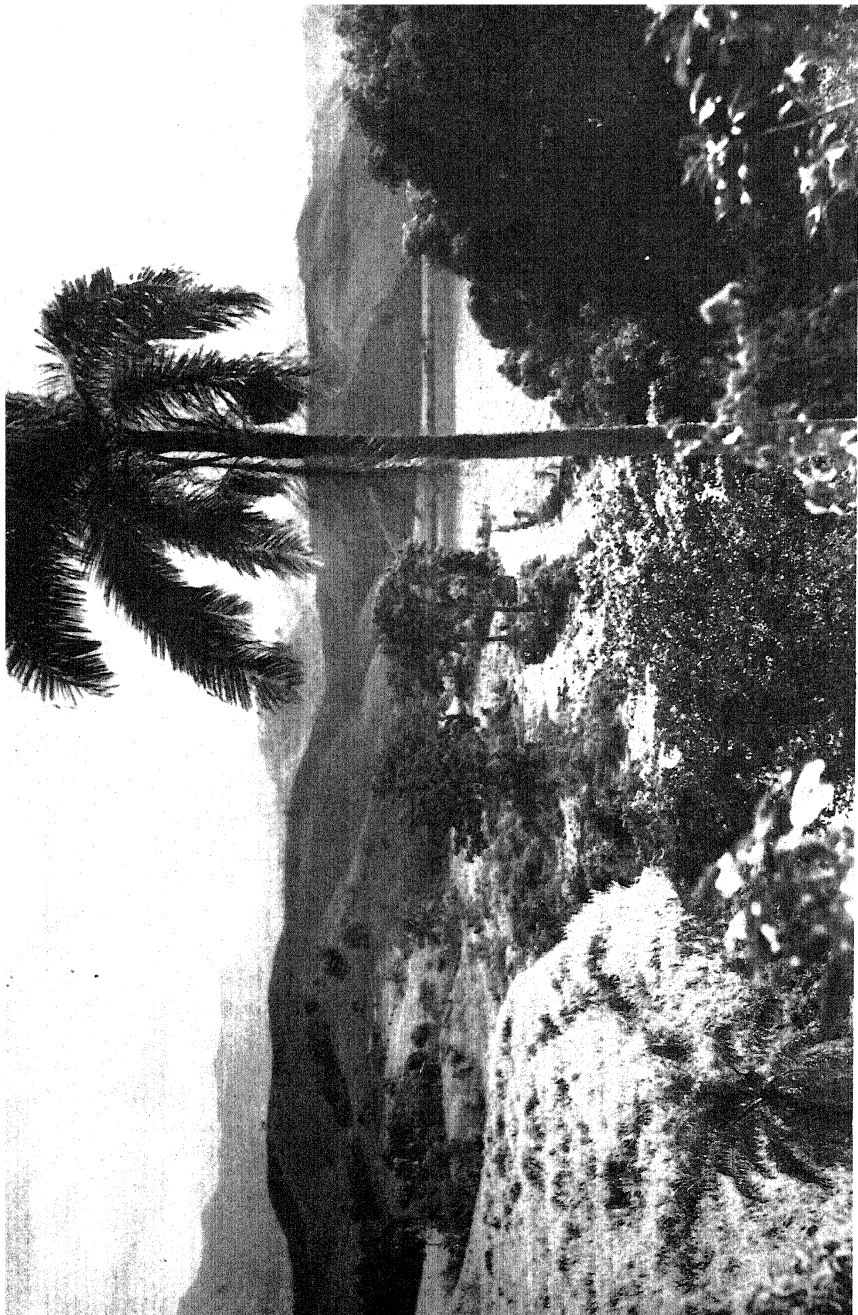
Returning from the Boca de Cangrejos, by a somewhat devious route which takes us past San Juan's two modern race tracks, Las Monjas and Quintana, we reach the main road again at Hato Rey, a continuation of San Juan's suburbs. Here we turn southeast once more, and come presently to Rio Piedras, a thriving suburban community which is to San Juan very much what the city of White Plains is to New York.

This could scarcely be called a distinction, but Rio Piedras has another more valid claim to our attention, for it is the seat of the University of Puerto Rico. Founded in 1903, this institution, which is sponsored by the insular government, is modeled after the universities of the various states, and has today an enrollment of some five thousand students. Located at Rio Piedras are the College of Arts and Sciences, the College of Business Administration, the College of Education, the College of Pharmacy, and the Law School. We pass the campus on the left, the attractive Hispano-Mauresque buildings blending pleasantly with the surroundings, a short distance before the center of the town is reached. At the present moment a program of construction and enlargement, financed in part by PRRA funds, is nearing completion. Already the standard of scholarship is high. When the work of construction is done, and the last scaffold is removed, the university will be one of which any Puerto Rican may well be proud.

Beyond Rio Piedras we plunge at once into the country. The road



As seen from Escambron, San Juan stretches out to a long point.



The Royal Palm is a familiar tree upon the Puerto Rican landscape.

we follow traverses the coastal plain, well back from the ocean, which is nowhere between this point and Luquillo visible. The countryside here is rolling rather than mountainous, though away on our right running parallel to the road looms the high, rugged mountain massif which culminates eventually, at its eastern end, in the peak of El Yunque—the Anvil. Everywhere, to right and left, we see evidence of the importance of sugar. For mile and after mile, as far as the eye can reach, the bright, light green of the standing cane stretches over hill and hollow and level ground. We see little evidence of other forms of cultivation along this stretch: only occasionally a little garden patch, some corn, a few yams, now and again a clump of banana palms. There are no forests. Such trees as there are overhang the road or stand in clumps upon the hillsides or in rows along the edges of watercourses. Most of them are unfamiliar, though strangely untropical to our eyes. Mangoes abound, as do soursops and breadfruit and calabash trees. One which is the exception that proves the rule and is both familiar and tropical is the royal palm. These trees grow everywhere wild throughout the island, standing now in graceful groves upon a steep hillside and now singly silhouetted picturesquely against the bright blue sky.

One thing cannot but strike us forcibly. Now and again we pass a cut over field, standing fallow and given over to grazing cattle, but for the most part the land is cultivated, and in the fields men are working. Some are cutting. Some are loading. Some are driving teams of heavy oxen drawing heavy, high-wheeled carts or shunting light flat cars about on spurs of narrow gauge track. Occasionally a modern note is introduced when a tractor replaces the yoked oxen. But everywhere there is a note of industry. People are busy—and really busy. There is no idleness or resting. Some uninformed northerners may have the impression that Puerto Ricans are lazy. Nothing could be farther from the truth. On the contrary they are extremely industrious. One needs only to see them at work upon their native hillsides to realize that. The *jibaro*, or peasant, goes to work with the dawn and returns with the setting sun, and more than that no one could ask. No northerner would work as hard in this climate.

At Carolina and again at Canovanas we pass immense centrals where the cane is ground. If it be the grinding season here the activity will approach the fever pitch. Laden trucks will be arriving and empties departing. Slow moving ox-carts will block the road, and the mills themselves will be hives of activity.

Rio Grande, the next town, is a good-sized village with a cluster of shops opening upon a long dusty street ending in an even dustier plaza, from which the road shoots down diagonally to the right to cross a gully. Hot and dusty though it may be, however, the people here seem cheerful and happy. They wave readily. Pretty girls in the doorways or upon the sidewalks smile charmingly. It is true that certain towns have more than their share of pretty girls. Rio Grande is one. Cayey is another. Aguadilla is a third. And there are probably others.

Beyond Rio Grande the countryside continues unchanged, save that the mountains are closer now. At Mameyes the road turns off sharply to the right for the long steep climb to the National Forest in the shadow of El Yunque. But it is worth our while to continue the short distance to Fajardo before turning away from the coast.

Fajardo lies at the extreme northeastern corner of the island and is the site of the Fajardo Central of the Fajardo Sugar Company of Puerto Rico, one of the largest on the island. It was at Fajardo that Commodore Porter landed, in defiance of international convention, to put the quietus on the pirates after he had driven them from Florida and Cuban waters. There are no pirates here now. Commodore Porter saw to that. But there is an evil-smelling, round-bottomed, bottle-bellied, diesel-powered motor launch plying on an irregular schedule with the Virgin Islands, stopping occasionally at Culebra for no apparent reason, which might well be manned by their descendants.

Beyond Fajardo the road continues on around the northeast corner of the island to Naguabo and Humacao, sometimes well up on the shoulder of the ridges that here extend to the very water's edge, sometimes skirting close along the shore through luxurious coconut

groves, with always the mighty pile of El Yunque looming on the right to form a magnificent background.

Picturesque as the drive is, however, the preferred route lies directly through the mountains themselves. Accordingly we turn about and retrace our steps through Luquillo, home of the Central San Miguel, to Mameyes, where we turn sharply off—to the left this time—for the long pull into the hills.

The road loses no time gathering itself for the climb. A scant two miles suffices for the take off: a short nearly level stretch that leads into a swiftly narrowing river valley. For an instant it seems as though we would follow the conventional program of sticking to the river bottom. Then abruptly the road attacks the steep side of the ridge, doubles back upon itself, gaining the crest by a series of looping curves.

But this does not mean that we cease to climb, even for a moment. The crest of the ridge climbs almost as steeply as do the sides. Up and up we zigzag, riding now on one side of the shoulder, now on the other, but always climbing higher and higher. Behind us the coast line drops away rapidly. If we look back, so sudden has been our rise, we feel something of the same sensation as that experienced in a rising plane: that same feeling of having the earth drop away rather than of upward movement on our part. Mameyes already looks like a cluster of toy, cardboard houses set in an artificial landscape. It comes as something of a shock to see how close we were to the sea down there, although we could not see it from the main road. Off to the east we can already see Culebra and the Cucarachas.

The sugar country of the lowlands is soon left behind. For a short space we ride through bare, open pasture lands. But the trees are growing thicker now. The scattered clumps become more and more continuous. Banana palms and plantains appear to grow wild. Other unfamiliar varieties of trees appear. The open pasture lands give way to scattered coffee plantations, and these in turn give way to more thickly wooded areas. Almost before we know it we are in the forest. To name all the varieties of trees would be a hopeless task. It is said that some three hundred species have been recorded

as native to the area, and new species are constantly being discovered. Giant mahogany trees, guaraguao, tabanuco, Spanish cedar, ausubo, satin wood, and laurel sabino, a species of magnolia, are but a few. Under them and among them grows a tangle of smaller trees and shrubs, vines and creepers, a bewildering variety of ferns, from the dainty maidenhair to giant tree ferns reaching a height of thirty feet. On fallen logs, in crevices in the rocks and on the banks beside the road an amazing variety of orchids and other tropical flowers bloom. In the forks of trees and on the branches grow hundreds of strange looking air plants. Feathery palms add to the tropic appearance. In this climate, with adequate rainfall, vegetation is rank and abundant. No more tropic jungle than this could be imagined.

Numerous small streams and watercourses cross the road. Once we round a bend to come face to face with large stream plunging down across a sheer rock wall in a magnificent waterfall—an eloquent testimonial to the abundance of nature's bountiful water supply. It is estimated that in this particular area the annual rainfall is about a hundred and fifty inches. It is an interesting commentary on the varying conditions throughout the island that Aguirre, less than forty miles away on the south coast, has an annual average rainfall of only thirty-eight inches!

The road continues to climb—and it is an excellent road, built and maintained by the CCC—winding in and out in snakelike curves, rounding high shoulders of curiously stratified rock, circling the heads of deep ravines. On the one hand we look down, far down, upon the green, matted carpet of the jungle roof. On the other we look up at forest-covered slopes. Here and there a break between steep hillsides affords a glimpse of the craggy peaks of El Yunque, El Picacho, and Mt. Britton. We pass under the familiar shield of the United States Forest Service, announcing that we are now in the Luquillo Unit of the Caribbean National Forest. Beyond the road continues to climb, up and up and up and up. Now and again we pass an attractive camp, half hidden among the jungle trees. As in our western National Forests, the Government here leases certain areas to private individuals for the purpose of building summer camps.

As elsewhere the designs for these private camps must be approved before construction may be begun, and those who use them are subject to the Forest Regulations. Just beyond this point we come suddenly around a bend into a spacious, well-kept parking space, and here we must stop, for here is the La Mina Recreational Area and the center of the Luquillo Unit.

The Luquillo Unit is the oldest part of the Caribbean National Forest. In 1903, five years after the Spanish-American War, President Theodore Roosevelt, by presidential proclamation, created the Luquillo National Forest out of lands in this area which had formerly been the property of the Spanish Crown and to which the United States Government had fallen heir. By this act he established what was at that time, and what still remains, our only tropical National Forest. Years later, in 1935, another President Roosevelt, also by proclamation, extended the forest to include lands to be purchased in the Cordillera Central, the high mountains to the north of Ponce, the new unit to be roughly rectangular in shape, extending from Orocovis on the east to Utuado on the west, and from Villalba on the south to Cialito on the north. Both units combined were to be known as the Caribbean National Forest. The old Luquillo Forest was to become the Luquillo Unit, while the new section was to be called the Toro Negro Unit. Purchase of this new unit has not yet been completed. Today the Luquillo Unit comprises some thirty thousand acres. When the purchases for the Toro Negro Unit are complete the Caribbean National Forest will include some sixty-five thousand acres in all. This national forest is supplemented by several insular forests totaling some 25,600 acres. The director of the national forest is also the head of the Insular Forest Service.

The practical object which this setting aside of certain woodland areas was expected to serve is twofold. The first is the preservation of the existing forests on the island, which have been all but completely cut away. Puerto Rico today imports nearly all the lumber used for building purposes from the outside. It is estimated by forestry experts that if the half million acres of her surface which are unsuited to agriculture were scientifically reforested she could become

virtually self supporting as regards her timber needs. The second purpose of the forest, and by far the more important, is the preservation of existing watersheds and the prevention of erosion in the high altitudes subject to heavy rainfall.

But even were the setting aside of these areas of less practical value the move would still have been well worthwhile, for by it are preserved to the public use and ownership, for all time, not only the highest portions of the island, but also the only portions remaining today much as they were four hundred years ago when the white men first appeared upon these shores.

Until recently El Yunque has been considered to be the highest peak on the island, probably because it was the most conspicuous and nobody appeared to think to take accurate measurements. Certainly the Indians thought so. They called it "Yuke," which is said to mean "white cloud," and which the Spaniards only changed to their own equivalent of "anvil" by the addition of an "n." A further Indian legend has it that the red men believed this mighty mountain mass to be the seat of the good and evil spirits—Yukiyu and Jurican—the latter, with the Spanish "j" being the source of our word "hurricane." This is quite plausible. It was not at all unusual for Indians to connect mountains with gods. Like the story of the flood, it crops up again and again in the mythology of the most widely separated tribes, hinting at some dim and distant connection with the stories of our own Old Testament.

But the insatiable Spaniards were not awed by Indian superstitions. In their search for gold they penetrated even here, and one of the mines which they dug in hope of finding the precious metal may still be seen not far from the upper swimming pool in the La Mina Recreational Area.

In keeping with the Forest Service policy which aims at the maximum public service from the National Forest areas extensive plans for the development of recreational areas have been adopted. Some of these areas have already been developed. Others are yet to be developed. This does not mean that the entire area will eventually have the aspect of a city park. On the contrary, by far the greater

area will remain as it is today. Some small portions, however, will be developed for public use and recreation.

The best example of what is being done is in the La Mina Area. Here trails have been built to the various summits—El Yunque, El Yunque Rock, El Picacho, Mt. Britton and El Toro. It was at this time that it was discovered that El Yunque, 3,496 feet in height, was overtopped by El Toro with an altitude of 3,600 feet. Since then a number of peaks have been discovered in the Toro Negro Unit which are thought to approach 4,400 feet in altitude, but these being in the middle of the island and surrounded by other high mountains were much less conspicuous than the mountains of Luquillo.

Twenty-five miles of these trails have been constructed in the La Mina Area, and two free shelters, similar to those found in our other National Forests have been built near El Yunque and El Toro. Nearer the road, using the constant stream flow from the mountains, three swimming pools have been built, complete with bathhouse facilities. A series of fireplaces and picnic shelters have been built, and in addition a number of small attractive cottages have been erected in the forest below the parking space. These may be rented at extremely reasonable rates, completely furnished, by anyone who wishes to spend a day or two in the Area. Meals and refreshments of a sort are available at the central building and restaurant which is also situated a short distance below the parking space.

The whole thing gives evidence of careful planning and execution. There is nothing about it that is garish or in bad taste. Even the restaurant and central building, built almost entirely of logs and timber hewn from the surrounding forest, are inconspicuous. Without exception it is an achievement of which the Forest Service may be justly proud.

Not everyone will care to take the somewhat strenuous walk to one of the observation towers crowning the nearby peaks. Everyone, however, should walk down to the central building from whose terrace the view is superb. Standing at the rail and looking outward the entire La Mina basin, its steep slopes clad in the deep tropic green of the jungle, lies spread before one. In the distance beyond the forest

lies a narrow strip of lighter green, marking the cane fields along the coast. And beyond that the sea, its unruffled surface reflecting a half a dozen different shades of blue, stretches away. If the day be at all clear Culebra will be visible, and beyond that looms the dim bulk of St. Thomas and St. John in the Virgin Islands. If one is fortunate in the day, one may even be able to see, peeping over the shoulder of St. John, the hazy outline of the British island of Tortola.

Beyond the La Mina Area the road continues. For some distance the country remains much the same as before, save that it is wilder. Also we appear to have passed the crest. There is some up and down road, but in general we seem to be descending. Then gradually the descent becomes swifter. We pass several CCC camps. The road is rougher now, for it is incomplete, and the scars of its construction are still fresh upon the countryside. Then all at once, just below the last of the camps we come abruptly out onto the southern slope of the mountains and a magnificent panorama is spread before us. Directly at our feet the mountain falls away at an acute angle. To the right we see the road picking its way across shoulders and around gullies, clinging to the precipitous slopes like a white ribbon rolled along the mountainside at haphazard. In the foreground a spur of the mountain range juts out from the right, carrying the road with it. Beyond that and far below lie the patchwork cane fields of the south coast, and beyond that again is a narrow fringe of white beach and then the sea. Not far offshore, looking almost near enough to spit on, rises the island of Vieques, dusty green and barren seeming. Far away on the horizon, rising up out of the blue, blue sea, looms the distant bulk of the Island of St. Croix. On the left, hemmed in by mountain spurs, the Rio Blanco tumbles over a series of cascades to a hydroelectric dam in the valley below.

The descent that follows is not for squeamish passengers. The road seems to cling to the mountainside by the merest hair. Below us it seems as if the rubbly slope must give way beneath our weight and send us tumbling into the abyss. And if we look up we wonder what keeps the mountain from tearing loose and sliding down to smother us beneath its weight. At last we strike level road at Rio

Blanco, and bearing left come to the main highway around the island just below Naguabo.

We turn to the right here and rush off across level ground through luxurious groves of waving coconut palms. On our left the sea breaks gently upon a narrow strip of beach and the sunlight glints dazzlingly upon the sparkling waters. On our right, beyond the palms, lie level cane fields. And beyond them rises the ponderous mountain mass that we have just descended. We look at it marveling that any vehicle could traverse its precipitous slopes.

On narrow, stone-parapeted bridges the road crosses several placid inlets, the mouths of rivers. Their banks are fringed with mangroves, and the tall palms and the mountain in the distance are reflected upon their surfaces. We pass through a squalid, seaside village with naked, pot-bellied children playing in the streets. Beyond that the road turns back into the low coastal hills, threads its way among the cane fields, and comes presently to Humacao.

Humacao is the spotlestown of Puerto Rico. A little dusty, a little dazzling, perhaps, in the bright sun, but scrupulously clean and neat. The little plaza with its green trees and shrubs and the white church rising at its end looks pleasant and inviting. The people are pleasant and cheerful and friendly. The officer of the Insular Police, even as at home, will probably offer you tickets to the policemen's benefit ball, which you will buy, not from any fear of the long arm of the law, but rather because they are offered in such an evident spirit of good will. If we care for a little refreshment three cents will buy from the stand facing the end of the plaza a dozen of the tiny, delicious little bananas known as "lady's fingers." For the same amount we may have a half a dozen sweet, large, juicy oranges, ready peeled in the expert Puerto Rican manner and with a hole cut out of the end for sucking. There is a small inn in Humacao, neat, and clean, and well kept looking. I have never stopped there, but I would not be afraid to try it as I would the inns in some of the other towns about the island.

From Humacao we may return to San Juan by way of Juncos and Gurabo and Caguas, through country somewhat more rugged in char-

acter though on the whole very similar to that through which we passed during the morning before turning into the mountains. The same cane fields stretch on either hand. The same ox-carts and jibaros work in the fields. At Gurabo my own driver pointed out to me a steep hill up which straggled a distressing slum, and remarked that it was one of the two places on the island where poisonous snakes were to be found. The island authorities deny the existence of snakes of any sort in Puerto Rico. Whether this man's statement was just a bit of local superstition or not, I do not know. I did not investigate. The man claimed to have come from Gurabo originally, and I took his word for it.

If we have made an early start, however, and if our driver is willing—for it is a long drive—it will be better to continue on around the coast to Guayama. After leaving Humacao we plunge again into the rolling cane country, crossing several small rivers before Yabucoa is reached. Beyond Yabucoa the road climbs steeply in winding curves over a mountain spur that juts southward towards the shore from the Sierra de Cayey. At the crest of the ridge we are afforded another sweeping view of sea and shore, after which we drop down again to the village of Maunabo. After Maunabo we again skirt the shore closely through groves of palms to Patillas, Arroyo, and ultimately to Guayama.

Guayama is a large town, a hot and dusty one, and a rather uninteresting one, despite the fact that it possesses an interesting cathedral dating from the last century. It is an important town, the center of a large sugar-producing area, and boasts two large centrals, the Machete and the Guamaní. Although it is larger than Humacao it lacks the smaller city's scrupulous cleanliness. Neither do the people seem so friendly or cheerful.

One thing is particularly noticeable here. That is the preponderance of black faces. Puerto Rico has many Negroes. In a population of some 1,700,000, something over 426,000, or approximately 25%, are black or colored: this by the latest figures. That is not unusually high for these parts. In fact it is rather unusually low. Almost without exception throughout the islands the blacks outnumber the whites

by far more overwhelming percentages. Nevertheless to a northerner unaccustomed to such a heavy percentage of dusky faces it seems like a great many. Even if these were evenly distributed among the entire population it would seem like a great many. But the distribution is far from even. They seem to concentrate in the coastal cities, at such points as Ponce, Mayaguez, Arecibo and San Juan—and Guayama. So that, to an outsider at least, it seems as though the population of these cities is predominantly colored. In the mountains, on the other hand, while the faces one sees are swarthy, there is a noticeable absence of negroid features.

We leave Guayama by the old Spanish road, a spur of the famous military highway from Cayey. At first the road follows the river closely, but presently, after a fork in the road, it crosses to the left bank of the stream and begins to climb. Up and up it climbs, twisting and turning upon itself until we seem almost to meet ourselves coming around the corners, and we begin to think that if all the roads in Puerto Rico were laid out straight and placed end to end they might reach very nearly to the moon—especially if they were laid at the angle of some of these hills. If they could all be lifted bodily and dropped down just as they are with all their hairpin bends and switchbacks in a great pile they would resemble nothing so much as an enormous bowl of spaghetti. Now and again, in the midst of these musings we come around a corner that affords us a view back over the way we have come, showing us Guayama nestled among the low hills at the foot of the valley with the deep blue Caribbean beyond.

Reaching the crest at an elevation of almost three thousand feet we maintain our altitude for some distance, passing the summer residence of the governor which seems to hang precariously over a precipitous slope and has a magnificent view to westward along the tumbled backbone of the Cordillera Central.

Beyond this point the road begins to drop once more, winding between rows of brilliant golden-scarlet and orange flamboyants which, if the season be late May or June or July, turn many a Puerto Rican road into a veritable tunnel of fire with their blossoms. This

again is coffee country, and as we drop lower and lower into the valley we begin to see steep hillsides planted to tobacco.

We join the main military road at Cayey, a prosperous though undistinguished town—save in the beauty of its daughters—and here turn northward toward the capital, passing on the way the Henry Barracks, the summer encampment of the Sixty-fifth Infantry. Leaving Cayey behind, the road winds, climbing somewhat more gradually now, through what appears to be a combination of sugar and tobacco country. Here again the road is lined on either side with flamboyants which meet overhead. If they are in bloom we shall have eyes for little else.

At Las Cruces, halfway between Cayey and Caguas, if it be late, we may find it convenient to turn off to Cidra, and rest for the night at the Treasure Island Camps nearby, in the midst of a vast pineapple plantation.

If it is too early to stop, however, we may as well go on. From Las Cruces the road drops, with characteristic windings and a fine outlook eastward toward the Luquillos, to Caguas. This is a busy, thriving little city, the fourth in point of size on the island. It, too, boasts two large sugar centrals, both belonging to the Eastern Sugar Association, as well as a thriving tobacco industry. But beyond this it is without any outstanding characteristics other than the noisiness of its streets. In this respect it rivals San Juan itself.

After Caguas is passed the roadside and the country through which we pass, though pretty, offer little to hold our attention until we reach the fork leading on the left, by a secondary road, to Guaynabo. Our driver willing, we may take this route, not because there is anything of outstanding interest in the town of Guaynabo, but rather because beyond the town we will pass the island's largest and most elaborate *gallera*.

A *gallera* is nothing more nor less than a cockpit where fighting cocks are matched. Cockfighting is the national sport of Puerto Rico. At the beginning of our occupation efforts were made to suppress it, but that was like trying to suppress baseball in the United States. It could not be done, and so all restrictions were removed. Today mod-

ern hexagonal arenas such as the one at Guaynabo are devoted to the sport and attract thousands of fans every week. Every Saturday, Sunday and holiday evenly matched fighting cocks are pitted against each other to fight for forty minutes or until one or the other is knocked senseless or is killed. Betting at the ringside runs high, and much money changes hands on the outcome of some of these battles. A good gamecock it is said will bring fabulous prices running anywhere up to two and three hundred dollars.

Leaving Guaynabo by a somewhat roundabout route, it is possible to enter San Juan by way of the suburb of Puerta de Tierra. Once, not so long ago, this was one of the city's most miserable slums. Today, thanks to the PRRA, the slums are gone. In their place stands a modern suburb composed of small, neat concrete bungalows facing broad, well-kept avenues. They are all alike, it is true, like little cardboard boxes set in a row, but they are clean and substantial. Beyond the cluster of bungalows is an enormous housing unit in the form of a huge modernistic tenement, designed to accommodate more than two hundred of the families that formerly dwelt in the tumble down shacks of the district.

This is but a single project, to be sure. But it is a step in the right direction. Already other similar projects are under way to abolish similar slums in Ponce and San Juan as well as elsewhere on the island. It is to be hoped that over a period of years the work may go forward until in the end there is not a single slum district left standing.

THE ISLAND—PONCE AND THE SOUTH COAST

Chapter X

THE usual route; the best and most direct road, as well as the one most frequently traveled between San Juan and Ponce, the island's second largest city, on the south coast, is still the old Carretera Militar, a part of which, from Cayey through Caguas to San Juan, we have already seen. It is not necessary, however, for us to retrace our steps, for there is an alternative, and to my mind far more attractive, route, which leads us through Bayamon, Comerio, and Barranquitas, and rejoins the Military Highway at Aibonito, the next village west of Cayey.

Leaving San Juan, this road, like the others we have followed leads out over the San Antonio Bridge through Miramar and Santurce. At Santurce, however, it bears right and crosses the flat marshes south of the bay, through Pueblo Viejo, which is said to be the site of Ponce de León's original settlement of Caparra. Off on our right lies the section of curious little cone-shaped hills which first drew our attention from the deck of our steamer as we entered the harbor. We do not pass through them, however, but swing diagonally away southwestward through somewhat rugged though thickly cultivated country.

Traffic on the road is heavy, some of it long distance, bound for the cities of the north and west coasts. But most of it is local traffic between Bayamon and San Juan; for Bayamon is a busy, thriving little city. Through it, in addition to the ubiquitous sugar, a considerable quantity of oranges, grapefruit, pineapples and tobacco finds its

way to market. Bayamon also has a number of minor manufactures. But, like Caguas, it is noisy, crowded and dusty, and offers little attraction to the casual tourist.

We turn away from the main east-west highway at Bayamon and head southward into the mountains. For some distance the intensive cultivation continues despite the steepness of the slopes, and the sugar cane grows thickly up the sides and over the crests of the sharply peaked little hills. Literally these are "acres stood on end." Scattered clumps of stately royal palms, rising among the waving cane, add a picturesque touch to the rugged scene.

But presently we begin to climb in earnest, struggling, with characteristic windings and turnings, up the steep side of a ridge. Quite suddenly the sugar cane gives way to smaller patches of tobacco set in sear brown patches of open pasture land. Here and there along the road and beside footpaths which may be seen winding their way across the hills tiny, thatched native *bohios*, or huts, cling precariously. A cluster of banana palms creates a spot of shade for them, and in their hard-packed, dusty dooryards pigs and chickens and moth-eaten dogs scratch and sleep.

This climb is not a long one by comparison with some others we have already made. Almost before we know it we have topped the ridge and are plunging down upon the other side into the valley of the Rio de la Plata. This is the largest river we have seen since our arrival in the island, and is one of the largest, if not the largest, in Puerto Rico. It takes its rise in the mountains south and east of Cayey and just north of Guayama and Arroyo, so that it traverses almost the entire island from south to north before dropping into the Atlantic at Dorado, a short distance west of San Juan.

At home we would consider it little more than a good sized creek, but here it plays an important part in the life of the country. Near its head is the large Carite Reservoir. Between Cayey and Comerio it waters a broad, fertile basin. Below Comerio it becomes one of the island's important sources of hydroelectric power; and below this again it waters the cane fields of the north coastal plain.

Where we first strike it, it flows between steep hillsides, over a

winding, stony bed. The road follows it for a short distance on the left bank, sometimes running close down in the valley, and sometimes riding high above it on the shoulder of the hill. Presently, however, it drops suddenly and crosses on a long iron bridge. Above this point the hillsides close in swiftly on either hand and become precipitous, forming a narrow gorge. High up on the west side the road runs in tortuous curves, clinging for support to every ledge and crevice, and for once our driver is forced to slow down. Even here we see rickety, native shacks clinging to the brink of nothing. At one point, the very deepest of the gorge, a schoolhouse hangs out over the edge, balanced precariously on the slenderest of supports. As we swing past, our horn howling, the children run out to watch and wave and make faces. Far below, the waters of the river are only occasionally visible amid a jumble of gray-white boulders. Near the head of the gorge we pass a big hydroelectric power dam. Above that there is a small lake, in which a number of small boys and some men are fishing with long poles, cut and cured from the native bamboo which grows in feathery clumps here and there along the river's edge.

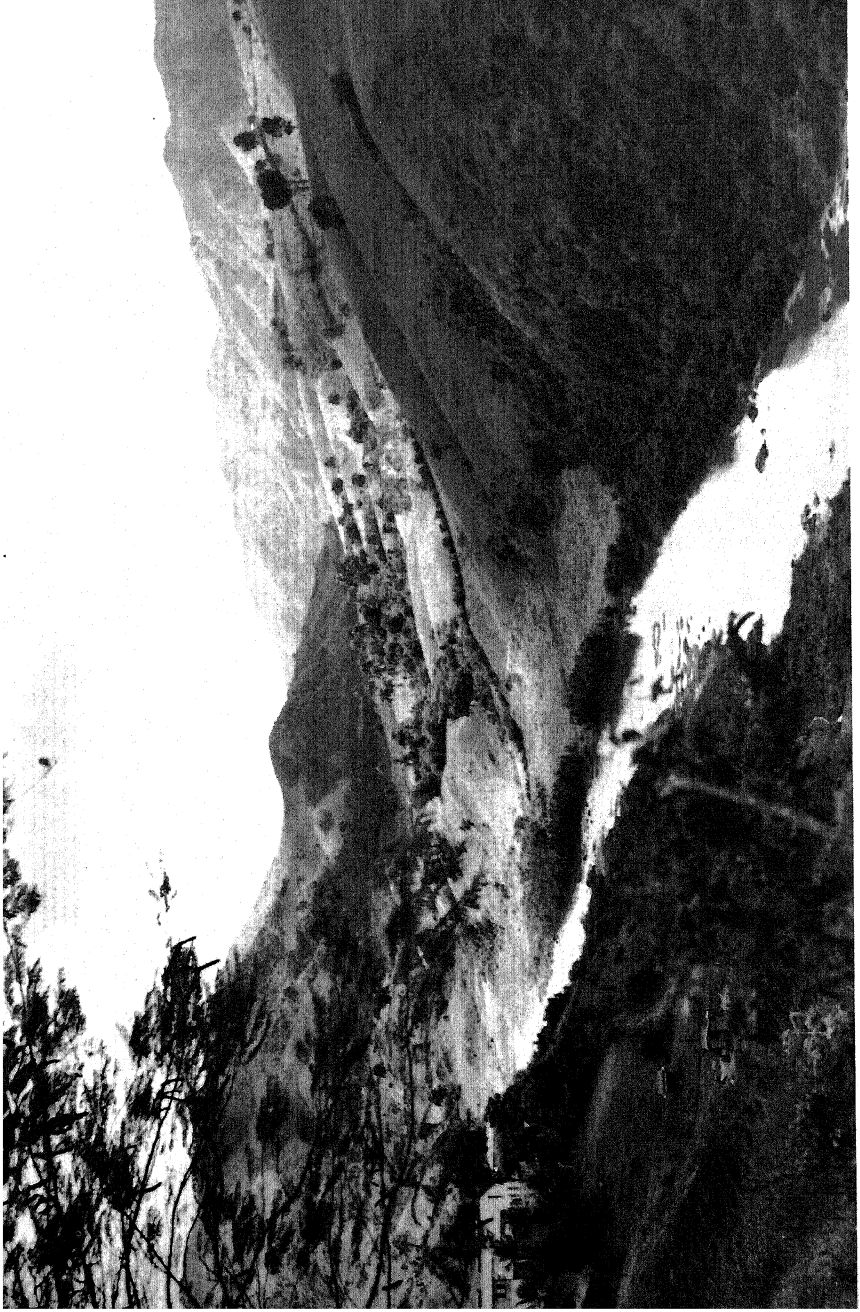
Above the dam the hills open out once more, and the road becomes somewhat less tortuous. A few miles farther on, the road to Cidra cuts back sharply on the left, offering an excellent and interesting short loop back to San Juan. Just beyond this point we round the shoulder of a hill and come in sight of Comerio.

Ever since we struck the Rio de le Plata we have been running through tobacco country. Despite the fact that the slopes are as steep as the roof of a Cape Cod house, the occasional patches under cultivation dot them everywhere, many of them running even to their summits. The big drying barns in which the leaf is cured are already a familiar sight. Here the effects of soil erosion are more apparent than in the cane country nearer the coast. Sugar cane, growing close and compact, has a greater tendency to hold the soil together. Tobacco, on the other hand, requires space between rows and between plants, and on such slopes as these, in a land subject to sudden torrential downpours, the wonder is that there is any soil left at all.

Comerio, as might be imagined, is a tobacco center. It is a white



Oxen and high wheeled carts are still familiar sights in Puerto Rico's
cane fields.



The Río de la Plata, near Comerio, is one of Puerto Rico's

town, sprawled upon the side of a barren hillside with its feet in the river. From a distance it has a picturesque appearance, but upon closer examination it proves to be as dusty and noisy as other Puerto Rican towns. The road from the north enters upon the busy main street, on a level with the river, and runs straight through the town. Midway it passes the inevitable plaza, tilted at an acute angle this time, as if to catch the full benefit of the sun's broiling rays. Above and below the town, in the bed of the river, we can see the women, squatting at the water's edge, doing the family wash. Soap is an unknown quantity here evidently, for papa's shirt is taking a beating upon the rocks that bodes ill for buttons.

Beyond Comerio the road swings up out of the valley in curves that carry it back upon itself and offer a series of breath-taking panoramas of the town below and the valley. The country continues sear and yellow-brown, reminding one somewhat of California's hillsides in September. But once the summit is reached and the long descent upon the other side begun, the country becomes greener and more densely wooded.

Barranquitas—"Little Gullies"—the next town beyond Comerio, is well named. Located at a bend of the Barranquitas River, it sprawls over hill and hollow, its tile roofs showing through the trees with which it is abundantly supplied, and the big white church on the hill in the center of town dominating the whole. It is a picturesque sight as we drop down upon it from the hills, and when the flamboyants, which grow profusely in the neighborhood, are in bloom there is no denying that it is one of the most attractive cities on the island. It is the center of a large coffee-growing region, and in addition serves as a mountain resort for the people of San Juan, many of whom have attractive summer homes in the vicinity.

From Barranquitas a side road leads off to Orocovis, through a wooded upland country which, were it not for an occasional bit of tropical foliage, might be anywhere in New England. Our own route, however, bears left out of the town and climbs the high hill behind it, offering sweeping vistas of the city and of the valley below. Once over the hill it runs through a country of no particular interest,

winding by the way, as all island roads must, and brings us in a short distance to the Military Highway not far from Aibonito.

In choosing this route we have missed the short bit of the Carretera Militar that lies between Cayey and Aibonito. Some of the scenery over this stretch is unquestionably superb. But after the experiences of the past two days one might well be forgiven if he admits to a certain feeling of indifference brought about for the time being by a plethora of that commodity! Everywhere one goes over these Puerto Rican roads the views are magnificent, so that one can hardly be blamed if, after a day or two, one grows accustomed to them.

One thing, however, deserves mention along this stretch. This is the homestead project of the PRRA, located in the valley of the Rio de la Plata about halfway between the two towns. The aim of this project is to encourage the ownership of the land by small farmers, to assist in the establishment of such small farms, and to abolish what might be termed rural slums. For this purpose the PRRA has acquired by purchase a number of large estates. These have been divided into small parcels which are offered at a price and on such terms as are within the reach of the people whom the project is intended to aid. The buyer need not buy a house with the land, but if he so wishes one will be erected for him on terms corresponding to those under which he purchased the land.

The Cayey-Aibonito project is of particular interest because of its present development. The valley at this point is quite broad, with a curious cone-shaped knoll rising in the middle. At the base of this knoll is a large, modern school building, and what appears to be a sort of warehouse. Scattered up and down the valley are quite a number of the small, neat, concrete homes which the PRRA builds for those who wish them. These are sharply in contrast with the flimsy, ill-kept, tumble-down shacks which one sees everywhere along the roadside, and of which a number still remain at the upper and lower ends of the valley. The farmers are given every assistance in getting the most out of their land. The knoll which rises in the center of the valley shows evidence of fairly scientific cultivation,

and there are a number of the familiar, large tobacco-curing barns in the valley.

Unlike Barranquitas, Aibonito does not live up to its name. It would take the poetic, Latin temperament to call a city, "Oh, How Pretty"! I suspect the name was originally applied to the pass above, whence one looks northward over the rolling, ragged hills towards the Atlantic, and southward over the sharp, arid, brush-covered slopes of the south side to the blue Caribbean. At any rate the village itself—to speak of it seriously as a "city" would again require the Latin imagination—is negligible.

Unless we make a side trip for a look at the homestead project in the la Plata Valley, we need not even look at the town, for our road strikes the Military Highway between it and the pass. We turn right here, and in another minute are across the height of land which separates the waters which flow northward to the Atlantic from those which flow south into the Caribbean.

Once again our descent is rapid—and tortuous. The slopes on this side of the mountains are steeper. But there is another difference. The mountainsides here are covered with brush: thorny acacia, a sort of wild mimosa, some calabashes, which seem to thrive in any soil. Everything is dry and dusty. Along the roadside grow numerous species of cactus and Spanish bayonet and the ever present, ever lovely flamboyant. A little below we see open pasture. Perhaps we will even meet a pair of barefoot Puerto Rican "cowboys," mounted on wiry little horses, driving a small herd of wild-eyed, buckskin-colored, long-horned cattle; for the hill region of the south is largely cattle country.

Despite its picturesque location at the mouth of a precipitous valley, with the conspicuous ribbon of a new road, now in process of construction, which goes north to Orocovis clinging to the mountain-side above, there is nothing of interest in Coamo, the first town we come to on the south side of the mountains. A short distance beyond, however, a road bearing off to the left brings us in a little to the famous Baños de Coamo, and the quaint, if somewhat old-fashioned, Coamo Springs Hotel.

The hotel and its grounds will come as something of a surprise to us, for although we will have heard much of it, it being one of the island's landmarks, we will in all likelihood not have pictured it quite as it is. We approach it over rolling, grassy country, coming upon it quite suddenly, though we have been watching for it momentarily. It is tucked away in a little hollow in the midst of nicely-landscaped, well-planted, well-tended grounds. The effect of the landscaping, however, is somewhat spoiled by a clutter of brightly-painted tables and lawn swings, rustic benches and pergolas, a tree platform marring the grace of a fine old tree, and a rather too free use of whitewash about the base of all the trees in what appears to be a lean-over-backwards effort at neatness. The hotel itself is a long rambling structure, with furnishings that might be termed Spanish-Victorian. The baths are reached by a long flight of steps down a covered passageway, the water for them being supplied by a series of natural hot springs. Like hot springs the world over, they are of strongly sulphurous nature, and are said to be very refreshing. The bath house itself, the oldest part of the structure, is built as if to withstand a siege, and the fittings are really ancient. Refreshing though the baths may be, one is likely to feel the need of another by the time he has climbed back up the steps to the hotel above. The accommodations are said to be most comfortable. The food is among the best to be found on the island, and is priced accordingly.

From Coamo Springs we have a choice of two routes to Ponce. One, leading through Santa Isabel, follows the south coast through extensively irrigated sugar plantations. The other returns to the Military Highway and leads westward through Juana Diaz, whence as an aside an awe inspiring loop may be made northward by way of Villalba and Jayuya through the high mountains of the Toro Negro Unit of the Caribbean National Forest, coming out at Ponce from the north.

Ponce, from no matter what angle one may approach it seems to be a city mainly composed of slums. To be sure, at its core, it is a modern, progressive, thriving, commercially minded city. It has banks and shops and modern business houses of all descriptions. It

has two sugar centrals and a sugar refinery, a distillery, an up-to-date port, a surprising number of hospitals, clinics and sanitariums, as well as a few ostentatiously palatial residences of rather questionable taste. But all around it is wretched filth and misery and squalor. Fortunately, here, as in San Juan, these are being attacked one by one under the PRRA's program of slum clearance, and their place will one day be taken by modern rehousing projects. In the meantime, however, Ponce remains a city of slums.

Ponce is the metropolis of the south coast, and the second largest city on the island. It has a population of some fifty-two thousand, and is far more important than it looks. Because it has plenty of room in which to spread it has sprawled widely across the coastal plain to east and west and south, and even to northward, straggling sporadically up into the foothills. To the northward it is shut off from the rest of the island by the Cordillera Central. On the south is the sea. Judging from contemporary photographs it has not changed greatly since the American occupation forty years ago.

It has not changed much in general appearance, that is to say. The camera could not show the changes that had taken place beneath the surface; yet even these, I dare say, have not been as profound as in San Juan, for instance, or Mayaguez, or even Arecibo. Ponce gives the impression of being a city that does not readily change its ways.

The answer lies in the fact that Ponce is, in reality, no city at all, but rather a small town grown large; and like all small towns is set in its habits. San Juan, crowded upon its narrow spit, has a definite and unmistakable metropolitan air, which sets it aside from the other communities of the island. San Juan moves forward with the times. Ponce, on the other hand, might be any one of a hundred smaller towns on the island, only with more houses added. It is like a child who has grown big for his age and who still wears short pants. And like a child who has grown big for his age, people frequently expect too much of him, and are disappointed when he does not live up to expectations.

But Ponce is no youngster. It was founded in 1752—and has

served as a sort of unofficial capital—social, commercial, political, and industrial—of the South coast ever since. In appearance it is very like other Puerto Rican cities, except that it is larger. It enjoys the somewhat spurious reputation of being more Spanish architecturally than any other town in the island. One who has seen both, however, will have some difficulty in finding the resemblance. The Spanish influence is here, naturally, as it is everywhere in Puerto Rico. But for anyone to hint that Ponce is a bit of old Spain transplanted bodily, without adaptations, to the island soil is patently ridiculous. Yet some of the more ardent Ponceites will claim vehemently that this is so.

The Plaza, which as usual occupies the center of the town, is larger than any we have seen thus far, and is pleasantly shaded by numerous trees. Instead of facing upon the Plaza, as is usually the case throughout the island, the cathedral here occupies the center of it, affording an excellent view of its imposing exterior. Behind the cathedral, and far more unique and interesting, is a wildly bizarre and gaily painted frame structure, bearing a sign above its wide doorway reading "Parque de Bombas." One hardly needs to understand Spanish to realize that here is the fire station, for the wide doors stand open day and night, and within one may see old-fashioned, hand-drawn hose carts and pumpers, as well as more modern and up-to-date fire fighting equipment. This building has been a landmark in Ponce for many years, and is the only instance I have ever seen of a fireman's museum.

The streets which lead off the Plaza are busy and well-paved but offer little of interest to the tourist in search of the historical and the picturesque. A mile or two to the southward, at the side of the wide, rather shallow bay lies the port, known locally as the Playa. Here are modern docking facilities for ocean-going vessels, as well as numerous large warehouses. It was at this point that General Miles, with the bulk of the American troops, landed on July 28, 1898, and received the surrender of the city.

Ponce has one hotel which might be classed as good when conditions elsewhere on the island are taken into consideration. It has an

attractive, vine-covered dining patio, which is extremely pleasant, and the food is by no means bad. But the rooms are small and stuffy and somewhat airless: an important consideration, when it is realized that Ponce shares with Mayaguez the distinction of being one of the hottest cities on the island, the temperature at night being but slightly, if any, lower than that of the day.

Westward from Ponce the road leads through rugged, rather arid country, passing through the towns of Penuelas, Yauco, and Sabana Grande. Between Penuelas and Yauco a short side road left leads off to the little seaside town of Guayanilla, with its two large sugar centrals. Yauco, a white, attractive little city sprawled upon the hillside, is of interest mainly because it was in this vicinity that the first real fighting of the Spanish-American War in Puerto Rico took place. A little beyond another road bears left to Guanica, the first landing-place of American troops on the island, and the point at which the American flag was first raised. Guanica today is the site of the great Guanica Central of the South Porto Rico Sugar Company, the largest on the island. In 1937 this mill ground more than a million tons of cane. Across the pretty little landlocked harbor is Ensenada where is located one of the island's two sugar refineries. Ensenada has the further distinction of being the driest spot on the island, having an average annual rainfall of only thirty-one inches. Maricao, only twenty-five miles distant in the mountains has one of the heaviest rainfalls, averaging a hundred and eleven inches annually!

Beyond Sabana Grande the country becomes somewhat less arid as we enter the valley of the San German river. A drive of some eight miles carries us over alternate, barren, upland hillsides and lush, cane-growing bottom lands, finally ending in a steep climb into the picturesque little hilltop town of San German.

San German is one of the oldest towns on the island, having been founded about 1512 by settlers from Santo Domingo. It claims the distinction of having been named by Diego Columbus, the son of the Discoverer. Besides its steep, picturesque, cobbled streets, it possesses one major attraction of interest to tourists. This is the little chapel of the Porta Coeli. No one seems to be exactly certain when this tiny

church was built, though estimates place the date of its construction all the way from 1512 to 1533. San German suffered a number of destructive raids from pirates and sea-raiders of one description or another during the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries; and it is quite possible that the little chapel was destroyed, in part or in full, and rebuilt a number of times. However that may be, it is quite obviously very ancient, and the claim that is made for it of being the oldest church in the island is probably true. Worn and grizzled and old, it dominates the town when approached from the east. It faces upon a long, narrow, cobbled plaza, over the tops of whose trees it looks serenely across to another, more modern church on the hill beyond.

There is a second attraction in San German worthy of our passing attention. This is the Polytechnic Institute of Puerto Rico, whose modestly attractive buildings lie in pleasant surroundings upon the hillside to westward of the town. Founded in 1912, by the Reverend J. W. Harris, a Presbyterian missionary, the Institute is the only privately owned and operated institution of higher learning on the island. Its object, as stated in its charter is "to develop the youth of both sexes mentally, morally and physically, through the regularly accepted studies in liberal and practical sciences, the study of the Bible, which shall be used as a textbook in the work of all its students, and the performance of manual labor by students domiciled at the Institution, thus to produce well-rounded character, resourceful, independent, and of sturdy Christian faith." Under the direction of its President, Dr. Jarvis S. Morris, the Polytechnic Institute is accomplishing a remarkable and most praiseworthy work.

In connection with the Institute is an attractive guest house, Costello Hall. This is managed by the college for the accommodation of "professors, tourists, and other friends of the school." If one can conveniently do so, one will be well advised to stop here for a night, or even longer, rather than in Mayaguez or Ponce, for it is clean and comfortable and pleasantly situated, and the hotels at Mayaguez in particular are among the worst on the island. The food is good, nearly all of it coming from the college farm, and the rates are most reason-

able. One should, however, inquire beforehand by letter as to the availability of accommodations, stating the expected time of arrival and the duration of one's visit.

San German lies near the southwest corner of the island, and beyond it the road turns northward towards Mayaguez, traversing a rich cane-growing country, well watered both by rivers and irrigation ditches, along whose borders grow dense clumps of feathery bamboo.

About halfway between San German and Mayaguez a road leads off right to the little town of Hormigueros—"the Ant Hills." The town itself is of little interest, but rising above it, on the very crest of the hill and silhouetted sharply against the sky, is Puerto Rico's most venerated shrine, that of Nuestra Señora de Montserrat. Pious Puertorriqueños regard this spot with the utmost reverence for the miraculous powers of healing which it is supposed to possess, and many hundreds of them each year make the pilgrimage thither to ascend the long flight of steps leading to the chapel on their knees. The chapel itself is said to date from 1640, though in its coat of spotless whitewash it looks newer. It is of interest only from without.

Beyond Hormigueros a second road winds back, through dense thickets of bamboo and fields of tall waving sugar cane, to the main highway. Here we turn northward once more, and in the space of a few short minutes find ourselves entering the outskirts of Mayaguez.

THE ISLAND—MAYAGUEZ, THE WEST AND THE NORTH

Chapter XI

MAYAGUEZ, the metropolis of the west coast, is not an old city as such things go in Puerto Rico. It counts 1763 as the year of its birth. But at least twice since then it has been destroyed as ruthlessly as a tree is chopped down: And each time it has grown up again, bigger, more flourishing, and more prosperous than ever.

Nor was this destruction the work of any mortal enemy falling upon it from the sea in days long since forgotten. Rather was it accomplished by a far more dread foe. And the hideous memory of it is fresh in the minds of many who were mere babies at the time, and who are little more than children now.

Mayaguez was wiped out for the first time in October 1918 by a hurricane and an earthquake, which by a freak of nature struck simultaneously, bringing in their wake a tidal wave which wrought terrific damage all the way around the coast from Aguadilla to Cabo Rojo. Recovery from that blow was slow and painful.

But scarcely had the stricken city regained its feet and moved to take again its former position of importance in the affairs of the island, than the second blow fell. In September 1928 the terrible San Felipe hurricane fell upon the city, once again bringing death and destruction in its wake.

When the last bit of débris had been cleared away; when the dead had been buried and the injured cared for, the people of Mayaguez set their faces once again to the task of rebuilding their homes. The city that stands today upon the western edge of the island, overlook-

ing the wide expanse of the Mona Passage, a modern, busy, clean, attractive city, is a monument to their perseverance and their courage in the face of the most tragic and disheartening conditions. If Mayaguez is today one of the most important cities on the island she has earned the right to that position by her own sweat and blood and tears.

Mayaguez today is Puerto Rico's third city, having a population of some 37,000. Because it has been almost completely reconstructed, it contains almost no buildings of historical interest. The principal street, the Calle Mendez Vigo, bisects the town through the center, running down from the business district along a gentle slope, passing through a pleasant residential section, and ending among the warehouses of the port. The port itself, or rather the roadstead, is open to the west, and is deep enough to accommodate the largest vessels. A considerable portion of the island's trade passes through it. South from the port a gray sand, rather weedy, unattractive-looking beach swings in a wide arc. A road follows its curve through dense groves of graceful nodding coconut palms, and after crossing two small rivers near their mouths ends at the Escuela Correccional—the Insular Reformatory—whose neat, well-kept buildings crown a small knoll at the tip of the outer point. This institution is among the most progressive of its kind, and endeavors to train its inmates in useful trades and to educate them as well as to penalize them for anti-social activities. There is little of the air of a prison about it. But for the bars at the windows, the buildings might be those of a well-endowed boarding school. Only boys sixteen years and under are sent here, and these are released when they have turned twenty-one. A sentence to the Escuela Correccional seems to carry with it no stigma. In fact, boys have been known to commit minor crimes for the avowed purpose of being sent here! A visit to it is well worthwhile, for it typifies island progress in a way that many another institution is unable to do.

Mayaguez is the home of needlework, Puerto Rico's second largest industry. The export value of this industry to the island, the best index of its importance, in the year 1936-37 amounted to some \$21,000,000. When it is realized that this was nearly a third of the

value of the sugar exports for the same year and nearly a fifth of the total export trade of the island, some idea of its importance may be gained.

Everyone in the United States knows the quality and daintiness of Puerto Rican needlework. Nearly every traveler who sails for San Juan has some friend who has asked him to pick up a few handkerchiefs or undies or other such knickknacks at the bargain prices which they assume he will find there. Indeed, there are tourists whose sole aim in traveling seems to be to pick up "bargains" of which they may boast to their envious friends at home. Such as these will endure a rude shock when they come to Mayaguez. Though one is welcome to visit the factories, when the time comes to buy one is apt to be somewhat startled at the prices asked.

"Why!" it is not unusual to hear a customer exclaim, "I can buy these things cheaper in New York!"

And, indeed one may. The answer is simple. New York wholesale houses control by far the greater part of the industry. Much of the designing is done in New York. Patterns and materials are shipped to Puerto Rico, the New York firm either retaining title to the goods or contracting for the entire output of a factory. Mayaguez furnishes the labor. When the work is done the goods are packed and shipped back to New York. There the buyers for the shops—Puerto Rican as well as continental—buy them. Thus when one buys needlework in a Puerto Rican shop, one pays freight on it from Puerto Rico to New York and back, as well as the wholesaler's profits and those of any other middlemen who have had a hand in the game. It is ridiculous, but nevertheless a fact. A very few small factories, some of the convents and industrial schools, do fancy needlework for the local trade, but even these, to an appreciable extent, set their prices according to the market. Here and there one may find a real bargain, but for the most part these are the exceptions. Some day some one in the trade will realize the possibilities of the local market and the tourist trade. He will find, on investigation, that he can sell in quantity at lower prices and still make better profits. When this day comes one may look for real bargains in Puerto Rican needlework. But

until that day comes one might better do one's souvenir-shopping in New York.

Just to the north of Mayaguez, an easy walk of little more than five minutes from the center of town, there is a fine avenue of stately royal palms that leads on the one hand to the campus of the College of Agriculture and Mechanic Arts of the University of Puerto Rico, and on the other to the Puerto Rico Experiment Station of the United States Department of Agriculture. The College of Agriculture, which also includes the Architecture, Engineering, and General Science Divisions of the University, accounts for some six hundred and fifty students of the University's total enrollment, and, as is the case with a number of the state universities, operates as a separate unit quite apart from the campus at Rio Piedras.

The Agricultural Experiment Station, whose attractive buildings and pleasantly landscaped grounds adjoin those of the College of Agriculture and Mechanic Arts, is one of the most intensely interesting as well as one of the most important of the various Federal agencies on the island. In 1901 Congress appropriated \$15,000 for the establishment of an Agricultural Experiment Station in Puerto Rico. At the same time the insular legislature of Puerto Rico contributed a like amount to the project, to be used for the purchase of land for the station. Experts of the Department of Agriculture agreed that Mayaguez offered the most suitable location, and when it was found that the farm selected would cost more than the amount appropriated for the purpose, the City of Mayaguez itself appropriated an additional \$4,000, which it donated to the cause. The two hundred and thirty-five acre farm which was subsequently acquired was transferred to the Department of Agriculture, the title to rest with the United States Government so long as an experiment station is maintained upon the land.

The services which the agency thus established have rendered to the island have been of inestimable value. At least once the station has rescued the sugar industry from virtual destruction by the introduction at a critical moment of new varieties of cane that were resistant to blight and insect pests. It has further materially aided the

industry in extending its scope by the introduction of new varieties of cane which will grow and thrive in regions where other varieties will not. Nor has this assistance been confined to the sugar industry alone. New methods of agriculture in all lines, methods for the checking and prevention of soil erosion and the utilization of waste lands, new crops and new varieties of existing crops have been introduced. Neither does the station confine its services and activities to farm crops, though these because of their greater importance most naturally receive the greatest attention. Horticulture and animal husbandry also come in for their share of attention. Much has been done towards the permanent beautification of the island, and attention has been given to the improvement of existing strains of livestock, as well as to the introduction of new breeds, and to the study and eradication of animal diseases.

In an island so dependent upon agriculture as is Puerto Rico, the value of such services as these can hardly be over-estimated. This station is largely responsible for the introduction and encouragement of high value crops. Vanilla and Sea Island cotton owe, if not their actual introduction, at least their development and promising future to its activities. Experiments are constantly going forward. One of the most interesting of these looks towards the establishment of a native perfume industry for the island. Naturally the station can do nothing towards the actual establishment of the industry. It can, however, and does experiment with the introduction of such perfume-bearing plants as ilang-ilang, certain species of mimosa, and others, and further experiments conducted in its laboratories prove that perfumes of a high grade can be produced. Similar experiments are going forward with bamboo varieties, with cinchona, from which quinine is obtained, and with hundreds of other plants. Some idea of the scope of the institution will be gained when it is realized that in the year 1935-36 four hundred and fifty-seven different species of plants were introduced on the station's grounds for experimental purposes—this in a single year! It is said that the experiment station at Mayaguez has the largest and best-recorded collection of tropical plants in the Western Hemisphere.

The station is under the able direction of Dr. Atherton Lee whose enthusiasm is infectious. Visitors are welcome at the station and a member of the staff is always available to show one around the grounds. Those who are interested in such things will find that they can with profit spend a day, or more if they can afford it, in study of the thousands of tropical varieties of plants to be found here.

A number of interesting drives may be made in the neighborhood of Mayaguez. Perhaps the most interesting of all of these, however, is that over the steep, winding road that climbs the ridge back of the city, the sharp slopes dropping away sheer on either hand, to Maricao in the mountains and the Insular Forests above it. From Maricao one may drive over what look to be impossible grades, upon a road built by the CCC, to an observation platform perched at the summit of one of the highest peaks. From here one overlooks the entire west end of the island; south to the Caribbean over the tip of Point Aguila; west to Mayaguez and the Mona Passage with little Desecho and Mona rising far off shore, and perhaps the gray bulk of Hispaniola—the island shared by Haiti and Santo Domingo—looming up from beyond the horizon; and north over tumbled hills to the Atlantic. But even if one does not make the climb to the observation platform this drive is worth taking if only for the views it affords of Mayaguez, and for the lush, tropical growth that covers these high hills on every hand in rank profusion.

Beyond Mayaguez the road encircling the island passes through rich sugar lands for some distance, avoiding the town of Añasco and crossing the Añasco River, which tradition says is the very one in which the Indians tested the mortality of their white overlords by drowning the unfortunate Salcedo.

From this point it turns left, running straight between the hills and the sea so long as there is a level bit of plain to cling to. Thereafter it climbs up on the flank of the hill above the water. Here it rises, dips and turns and rises again, finally to swoop down into the little seaside village of Rincon. From here it turns abruptly away from the sea and winds its tortuous way through the hills to come out once more upon the shore at Aguada.

It was at Aguada, most authorities agree, that Columbus landed in 1493—the only spot under the American flag on which the Great Discoverer ever set foot. There is a monument to commemorate the event, and a fountain is said to derive its waters from the very spring at which he filled his ship's water-casks. Aguadilla, a few miles further on, however, also claims to have been the point of landing—and it, too, has a monument and a fountain to prove it. Aguadilla has a magnificent beach, broad and gently sloping and fringed with coconut palms. But the traveler who is tempted to refresh himself with a dip should be reminded that bathing is none too safe in any of Puerto Rico's coastal waters. To be sure, one sees native boys taking chances everywhere, but every year an appalling number of bathers fall victims to the attacks of shark or barracuda. Why this should be so of Puerto Rico and not of the islands immediately to the east is one of those baffling mysteries of nature, yet it is an established fact.

Beyond Aguadilla the road runs through rugged, interesting country, sometimes following the shore line closely, affording magnificent vistas of the craggy shore line, and at others sweeping far inland to stretch out in a comparatively straight line across rolling uplands which the sugar cane shares with citrus fruits and pineapples. Here, too, is the largest center of production of Sea Island cotton, which is rapidly becoming one of the island's important crops.

Isabela, Quebradillas, Camuy and Hatillo follow one another in quick succession, and after a distance of some thirty odd miles we come again to wide, low-lying sugar lands and the city and seaport of Arecibo.

It is only in recent times that Arecibo has come to be considered one of Puerto Rico's more important cities. Situated at the mouth of the Rio Grande de Arecibo it serves a large sugar-producing hinterland. Vast cane fields surround it on every hand, and it boasts two large sugar centrals. Its streets and plazas are very busy and are interesting on this account, though there is little of architectural distinction. The port is nothing more than an open roadstead, but large vessels may come in quite close and load or discharge their cargoes

into lighters. Here, also, is one of those magnificent but dishearteningly useless beaches.

Beyond Arecibo, for some distance, lies a region of which one can only exclaim with Alice that it grows "curiouser and curiouser." Weird, ragged-looking little hills dot the landscape, their precipitous flanks covered with scrub brush and low woods wherever vegetation can find a foothold, while jagged outcroppings of white rock thrust sharply up above the level of the surrounding countryside lend a ghostly appearance to the scene. Despite the ruggedness of the land, however, citrus fruits appear to do well wherever there is a level space.

This region continues almost to the point at which the road turns off to Barceloneta. Here again we strike the rich cane lands of the coast, and, after passing in rapid succession through the towns of Manati, Vega Baja, Vega Alta, and Toa Alta, we find ourselves once again in Bayamon, having completely encircled the island and having crossed it twice from side to side.

PART III

THE VIRGIN ISLANDS

- XII. Eleven Thousand Virgins and a Saint*
- XIII. Saint Thomas and Saint John*
- XIV. Saint Croix*

ELEVEN THOUSAND VIRGINS AND A SAINT

Chapter XII

COLUMBUS, sailing north and westward from Guadeloupe in November, 1493, came in the course of a fortnight to the island which the Indians with him called "Ayay," and which he, characteristically, renamed Santa Cruz. On the following day he bore away northward, where he presently came upon a veritable tangle of islands, islets, cays, and inlets, which, in desperation, he lumped together and named for Saint Ursula and her Eleven Thousand Virgins.

From this it might easily be deduced that even the Discoverer did not regard the more southerly island as belonging to the more northerly group. Nor, indeed, does it. It is only a matter of administrative convenience which has since laid, so to speak, the Saint and the Virgins in the same political bed.

Saint Croix (as we now call the island which Columbus named Santa Cruz), Saint Thomas (which is today the principal one of Saint Ursula's group), and the eastern tip of Puerto Rico, form the three points of an isosceles triangle, with Saint Thomas lying at the apex. It is forty miles along one side of this triangle to Puerto Rico. It is forty miles along the other side to Saint Croix. And it is forty-five miles along the base of the triangle from Puerto Rico to Saint Croix.

Lumped together, as they usually are, the Virgins are the most northerly of the Leeward Islands. This, in turn, makes them the northernmost of that long chain of West Indian Islands, known as the Lesser Antilles, which lies flung in a sweeping curve, between the Caribbean and the South Atlantic, all the way from Puerto Rico on

the north to the Orinoco Delta on the South American Continent on the south. Against their craggy northern headlands the long Atlantic rollers, driven ceaselessly by the never-ending northeast trades, pound. On the south their shores are more gently washed by the clear, sparkling waters of the Caribbean.

The charts put Saint Thomas' position at $18^{\circ} 20'$ north, and $64^{\circ} 55'$ west. To speak in more familiar terms, however, besides lying forty miles east of Puerto Rico, Saint Thomas also lies some 1,400 miles southeast of New York, something like 1,000 miles almost due east of Key West, and about 600 miles north of Venezuela and the coast of South America.

Actually there are not as many islands as circumstances of their naming implies. Even allowing for a certain amount of Latin exaggeration, the good Admiral was drawing the long bow somewhat. Though none of the school books ever seem to have hinted at such a thing, it is possible that Columbus possessed a sense of humor, and this may have been his idea of a good joke. An actual count of the islands, cays and rocks charted between Virgin Gorda on the east and Savana Island on the west, and south to Saint Croix shows a grand total of exactly one hundred—and this figure includes many that are no more than isolated rocks, fragments of some larger, submerged reef, thrusting a jagged finger skyward above the tumbled surface of the surrounding waste of water. Anegada and Sombrero, with perhaps a dozen smaller cays and islets, lie still further east, on another chart, raising the total to a possible one hundred and fifteen. At the very most there are not more than a hundred and fifty.

Of these perhaps fifty belong to the United States. The rest, with Roadtown on the island of Tortola as their capital, are British. Of the American islands only three are of any considerable size. These are Saint Thomas, Saint John, and Saint Croix. Most of the rest are tiny, barren, precipitous, and uninhabited. A few, whose thin soil supports a scrubby growth of rank grass and brush, also support a few wild goats. Two or three more are inhabited by a family or two of Negroes, who eke out a bare living from the barren rock and from the sea.

The total area of the American islands is approximately 132 square miles. The population is about 22,000 of which only 2,000 are white. Three thousand are of mixed blood, while the remainder are Negroes. Saint Croix, which is the largest of the three has an area of seventy-four square miles. It is twenty-two miles long and six miles across at its widest point. On it there are two towns: Christiansted, sometimes called by the natives Bassin, which lies near the center of the north coast, and Fredericksted, or West End, at the western end of the island. The population, according to the census of 1930 was 11,413. Saint Thomas has an area of thirty-two square miles. Its greatest length is about fourteen miles and its greatest width about four miles. It supports a population of 9,834, again according to the 1930 census, of which 7,036 live in Charlotte Amalie, which is the seat of government and the largest town in the islands. Saint John, which lies three miles to the east of Saint Thomas across Pillsbury Sound, has an area of twenty-one square miles and is nine miles long by five miles broad. There are no towns on Saint John, though there are small settlements at East End, at Coral Bay, and at Cruz Bay, where the commissioner has his residence. There is a population of 765, of which about nine are whites.

In general aspect the islands are rugged and mountainous. They rise sharply from the water's edge, thrusting bold, rocky headlands seaward. All three rise to more than a thousand feet, a considerable altitude in so confined a space. Saint Croix is most mountainous along its north shore, the land falling away gradually across a rolling plain to the south. Saint Thomas and Saint John find their only level spaces at the mouths of steep, brush choked gullies. The coasts of all three are indented at frequent intervals by numerous small bays at the heads of which are often to be found magnificent palm fringed beaches of fine white sand. Unlike Puerto Rican beaches these may be used freely and without fear. Although shark and barracuda abound in the outer waters, so long as bathers remain reasonably close to the beach, these wolves of the sea, for some mysterious and unknown reason, appear to be indifferent to them. If bathing accidents occur one does not hear of them, and the natives swear that they do not

occur. One will, however, be well advised to confine one's swimming to the coves.

Geologically the islands are the peaks of a submerged mountain range, known to oceanographers as the Caribbean Andes. They are of volcanic origin with an overlay of coral rock at and below the water line. Saint Thomas and Saint John, with the British Virgins on beyond, are a continuation of that range, of which Cuba, Hispaniola, and Puerto Rico are a part, which in former days thrust out from the Yucatan Peninsula of Mexico. Saint Croix is a part of another range which thrust north from South America to join with the Yucatan Range. At some time in the tertiary period both these ranges sank beneath the level of the sea, forming the islands which we know now as the West Indies. Some idea of the vast heights which these under-sea mountains attain will be gained from the fact that between Saint Thomas and Saint Croix the sea reaches a depth of nearly 15,000 feet.

Despite their early discovery it was some time before the islands were settled. In the course of nearly a century French, Dutch, English and Spanish all made half-hearted attempts to establish colonies among them. None of these, however, had opportunity to become firmly rooted before one of the others would swoop down. Spain, through their discovery by Columbus, might have been considered to have had the prior claim to them. England also claimed them as a part of her colony at St. Kitts, a hundred and fifty miles away, evidently basing her claim on the well-known British attitude that any place is British which is not already occupied by a force sufficient to keep her out. France laid covetous eyes, as a matter of policy, upon anything claimed by Britain. And Holland was quite active in carving out a colonial empire for herself, and in consequence was a power to be reckoned with upon the sea.

But in spite of this none of these seemed overly anxious to settle the islands. Rather, if they could keep the others from doing so they were satisfied. The idea of another claimant arising, as it were, from the blue and pinching the whole business from under their very noses, never seemed to occur to them. Yet this is precisely what happened. In 1667 a party of Danes entered what is now the harbor of Saint

Thomas and quietly took possession of it in the name of their King. Some few of their number stayed behind to form the nucleus of a colony, while the rest sailed home with the news. In that day the eyes of the world were focused upon the trade with the Indies. It was the day of the India companies, and Denmark had long been on the lookout for an opportunity to enter the field. A company was formed in Copenhagen in 1671, to be known as the Danish West India and Guinea Company, and in the same year the first Company governor, Jorgen Iverson, arrived at the islands with arms and ammunition and a year's supplies and a company of soldiers and colonists sufficient to establish a settlement and hold it against attack. Before the Spanish in Puerto Rico and the British in St. Kitts and "Antegoa"—as they then called Antigua—and the French and the Dutch had time to realize what had happened, the little colony was already firmly established.

The French, and the British, and the Spanish, and the Dutch all grumbled at this high-handed business, but none of them apparently thought it worthwhile to try to drive the Danes out. Perhaps they thought the Danes would lose their stomach for colonization after a few years and abandon it, but if they did they were mistaken. The colony thrived. Neither were the newcomers burdened with a native problem. What became of the few Indians who inhabited these islands at the time of their discovery by Columbus is a mystery which has never been quite satisfactorily solved. The probability is that they were hunted out by the Spaniards and carried off as slaves to work the mines and plantations of Cuba, Hispaniola, Mexico and Peru. But whatever became of them they had completely disappeared. The Danes, on their arrival, found the islands uninhabited.

Uninhabited the islands may have been, but unoccupied they were not. Long before the coming of the Danes the pirates and privateers that infested these waters had discovered that the tiny sheltered bays of Saint Thomas and Saint John made ideal hiding places in which to careen their ships or lie in wait for passing victims. The arrival of the Danes only facilitated matters for them, for the canny Norsemen,

with their nose for profit, were not in the least averse to doing business with them.

From the very first the colony enjoyed a somewhat unsavory reputation as a safe haven for the Brethren of the Coast—and this in a region where few ports could be wholly acquitted of the charge. During the eighty odd years of Company rule the colony had some twenty-one governors, and many of these were as utter scoundrels as the thieves they harbored. Such notorious villains as Bartholomew Sharp, Edward Teach—whom every schoolboy knows as Blackbeard—Captain Kidd, Tempest Rogers, Captain Bellamy, Bartholomew Roberts, Captain Vane, Stede Bonnet, and Captain Rackham knew the place well. A letter from Governor Nicolas Esmit, written 1682, throws interesting light upon the subject: "There arrived here February 8, a ship of unknown origin, some two hundred tons in size, without guns, passport or letters, and with seven men, French, English and German. On being questioned they replied that they had gone out of Espaniola with 200 men and a French Commission to cruise on the Spaniards—" This was Bartholomew Sharp's ship, after its return from the Isthmus of Panama and the Pacific. The letter continues: "I bought what little Cacao they had; the rest of their plunder they brought ashore and divided among our people. The ship was no longer usable. *I have decided not to confiscate it, in order to avoid unfriendliness with sea-robbers.* The inhabitants of Saint Thomas have decided that the said seven men shall remain among them." Another writer, referring to Saint Thomas in 1708 says: "There any piratt for a smale matter of money may bee naterlized Deane."

In spite of this, or more likely because of it, the colony prospered fairly. In 1680 the little red fort which still overlooks Charlotte Amalie's magnificent harbor was completed, thus discouraging any attacks which may have been brewing on neighboring islands. The importation of slaves from the Guinea Coast was a part of the Company's avowed purpose, and this side of the business was not neglected. Slaves were brought over by the shipload and lodged in barracoons pending disposal not only in Saint Thomas but in other islands up and down the West Indies and on the mainland. In this

way the island quickly became one of the wholesale centers of the slave trade.

The colony had its law-abiding element as well. This was made up largely of planters. Under their oversight sugar quickly became the mainstay of island agriculture. In 1717 a colony was planted on Saint John, over the protests of the British who also claimed that island, and a small fort was built and garrisoned at Coral Bay to keep the British off. Many planters moved across, and in scarcely any time at all, with the help of large numbers of slaves, Saint John became as prosperous an agricultural colony as Saint Thomas. In 1733 the Danes bought Saint Croix from the French, who had in the meantime colonized that island. In the same year a bloody slave rebellion broke out on Saint John in the course of which many of the planters and their families were butchered. The Danes themselves were unable to cope with the situation, and called upon the French for assistance. The French complied readily, and the rebellion was put down with utter ruthlessness. In 1755 the colony was taken over from the Company by the Crown.

The passing years brought with them a measure of greater respectability. Gradually piracy in West Indian waters was stamped out. As the demand for new slaves in the new world decreased and the trade came to be frowned upon, it gradually dwindled away and finally ceased altogether. But by this time all three of the islands were prosperous plantation colonies.

In 1764 Saint Thomas was declared a free port and thrown open to the trade of all nations. Thereafter it quickly became the cross-roads of the Caribbean, and served as an entrepôt for the entire West Indian area. Ships came from all parts of the world to deposit cargoes in her warehouses and to take on others. Merchants, brokers, traders came to buy and sell the cargoes that were unloaded upon her wharves. She became one of the first ports of call outbound from Europe and North America, and one of the last homeward; and because of this she did an enormous business in ships' stores and supplies. Her shipyards were busy night and day.

In 1801 the islands were taken by the British who held them for

nearly a year. Again in 1807 they were taken by Sir Alexander Cochrane and held by the British until 1815, when they were restored to Denmark.

The islands' era of greatest prosperity came during the latter half of the eighteenth century and the first half of the nineteenth. In those days sugar, cultivated by slave labor, was king, and Saint Thomas' ship chandlery and warehouse business was thriving. But the nineteenth century saw the rise of two factors which were destined to bring the Virgin Islanders' world crashing about their ears. The first of these was the invention of the steamboat. The second was the growth of the idea that one man should not own another.

The effects of the development of steam power for ocean going vessels was not immediately apparent. Ships continued to call at Saint Thomas, though more of them began to carry their cargoes directly to the other islands and to South America. Cruising radii were small in those days, however, and for some days to come. It was necessary for ships to pause often and refuel, and what she lost in trade Saint Thomas managed to make up for by becoming a coal-ing station. Ships still needed supplies—food, water, and stores—however, and these Saint Thomas still continued to provide. Advancing years, though, brought improvements in methods of keeping food and similar stores. Engines were improved and cruising radii increased enormously. And as the efficiency of ships increased St. Thomas' trade dwindled. But as long as coal remained the principal source of power it somehow managed to survive. Bigger ships could carry more water. Improved methods of mechanical refrigeration might enable ships to carry supplies enough to last them throughout their voyage. But they still needed coal. The widespread adoption, after the war, of oil as a source of power sounded the death knell of Saint Thomas' bunkering trade. Oil-fired ships have a much wider cruising range than did those fired by coal. There is no longer any need for them to stop and refuel. Saint Thomas still coals a few old wallowing freighters. She has oil bunkering facilities, too, and these are regularly used by some lines. But no longer is it necessary for every

ship that passes to put into her harbor. The old prosperous days of shipping are in all probability gone forever.

But what about sugar? Thereby hangs another tale! The islands' slaves were freed in 1848, following an uprising of the blacks on Saint Croix. This was a blow from which little Saint John never recovered. Her plantations were too small in extent to permit of profitable operation with free labor, even if such labor could be found. There, as in Saint Croix and Saint Thomas, the blacks, unaccustomed to the necessity of earning a living, seemed to believe that freedom meant that they would no longer have to work. Many of them worked not at all. Those who would work, worked only long enough to earn the few necessary pennies which would keep them alive, and then quit. Saint Croix solved the problem in some small degree by importing contract labor from Barbados, but Saint John could not afford this, and her plantations were soon abandoned to the blacks and the hurricanes and the ever encroaching jungles. The desolate and abandoned ruins of what once were fine old houses, all overgrown with brush and creepers, are all that is left there to show what the island must once have been.

Saint Thomas fared somewhat better. To be sure, her plantations too were abandoned, but she could still draw a living from the sea, for she was still an important port of call for countless numbers of ships. Saint Croix, with her broad southern slopes, stood the best chance of survival, and the effort she made in that direction has already been mentioned. Vagrancy and the need for enforcing the labor contracts, however, resulted in the passage of severe laws, and these in turn brought about the bloody black rebellion of 1878. Many planters abandoned sugar altogether and took to raising cattle for the Puerto Rican market, an industry which continues to be important on the island today. Even under the adverse conditions the planters might have continued to make fortunes in sugar, but the development of other larger sugar-producing areas first, followed by prohibition which wiped out the island's rum industry, very nearly wiped them out. Saint Croix still produces more sugar than anything else, but it has been a desperately hard business, and one which has

not paid great dividends. Now with the rebirth of the rum industry holding out some measure of hope, renewed labor troubles again threaten its destruction.

As long ago as 1867 the United States entered negotiations with Denmark for the purchase of the islands. By somewhat dubious methods Secretary Seward had induced Congress to pay \$7,200,000 for Alaska—a valuable investment as it later proved, despite public disapproval. At the same time Seward negotiated a treaty with the Danish Crown for the purchase of all of the islands of the Danish West Indies, except Saint Croix, for \$7,500,000. The Secretary had no notion at the time of the value of Alaska. His sole purpose in purchasing it had been to eliminate Russia from the Western Hemisphere. Neither had he any idea of the worth of the islands. His reasons for wanting to buy them are somewhat obscure, but doubtless the thought that lay uppermost in his mind was that they would serve well as a naval station in the West Indies in the event of war with Great Britain, not entirely a remote possibility at that time owing to the tension between Britain and the United States arising out of the Alabama Claims.

Whatever his purpose, however, the deal fell through. A popular vote in the islands showed the people greatly in favor of the change. The Danish Rigsdag voted acceptance of the treaty, and the King, Christian IX, even went so far as to issue a Royal Proclamation announcing the transfer and bidding his loyal subjects farewell. Congress, though, refused to ratify the treaty, and all bets were off.

Again, in 1902, negotiations for their purchase were entered into by the two governments. The United States offered \$5,000,000 for all the islands. Congress approved, and again the natives were in favor of the change. But this time the Danish Parliament played us tit for tat. The Folkething, or lower house, voted for the transfer, but the Landesthing, or upper house, rejected it by a tie vote, and once again the deal had to be shelved.

Finally, however, in 1916, under the spur of a rumor that Germany was negotiating for the purchase of the group for use as a submarine base, the United States once again offered to buy them—this

time for the staggering sum of \$25,000,000, or approximately \$294.90 per acre. This offer was accepted with alacrity, and on March 31, 1917, the Danebrog was hauled down for the last time in Charlotte Amalie and the stars and stripes hoisted in its stead.

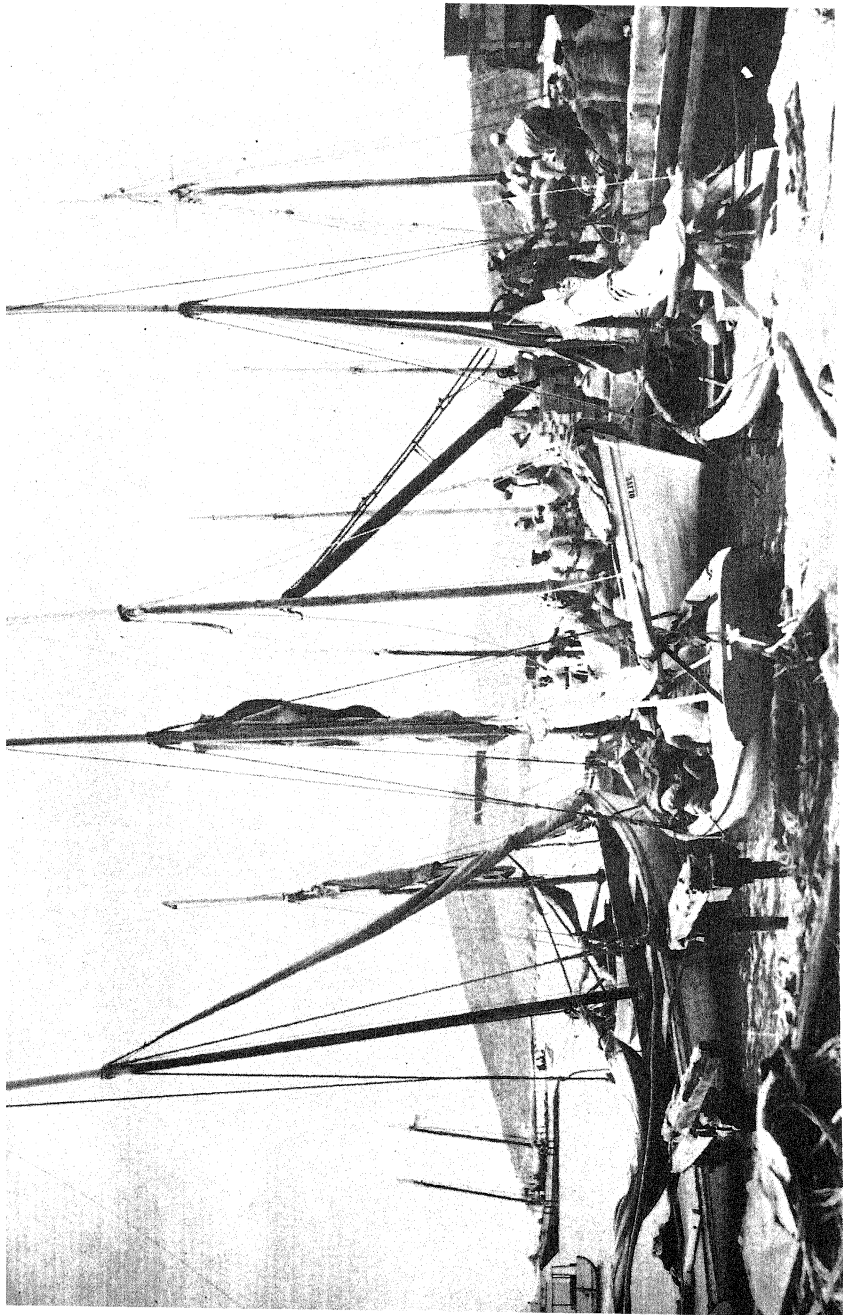
Hardly anyone would have contended that we got our money's worth. To sum it up, we had bought one large island—Saint Croix—the seat of a declining agriculture and the producer of an excellent rum, which last, incidentally, the one healthy and going industry of the islands, we lost no time in destroying. We had bought one medium-sized island—Saint Thomas—possessor of the remnant of a once great sea borne trade. And we had bought one small island—Saint John—whose abandoned estates produced some bay oil, for the manufacture of Bay Rum, and a modest amount of charcoal, the universal kitchen fuel throughout the West Indies. In addition we had bought a handful of smaller islets and cays which produced nothing. None of these islands had any natural water supply fit for human consumption. A few wells provided brackish water for cattle and for purposes of irrigation. But all drinking and cooking water had to be caught, as in Key West and Bermuda, from the eaves or in large concrete catchments set in the hillsides, and stored in cisterns. And the rainfall was by no means heavy: That of Saint Thomas averages about fifty inches annually, while that of Saint Croix averages about forty-eight inches. To be sure, the islands had a perfect climate, ranging from 91° at the top to 69° at the bottom of the temperature scale. In general they were extremely healthy places to live. They were surrounded on all sides by some of the softest, clearest, bluest waters to be found anywhere, and their beaches were ideal for bathing and for lazy loafing in the sun. But such frivolous items had not at that time come to be classed as definite commercial assets.

Army, navy and Government circles attempted at the time, and still attempt, to justify the purchase by raising the old German naval base bugaboo. If one examines the facts closely this proves to be the most utter nonsense. All the islands east and south were either French or British or neutral Dutch. To the west was our own territory. Germany's fleet was bottled up in the North Sea. All her resources

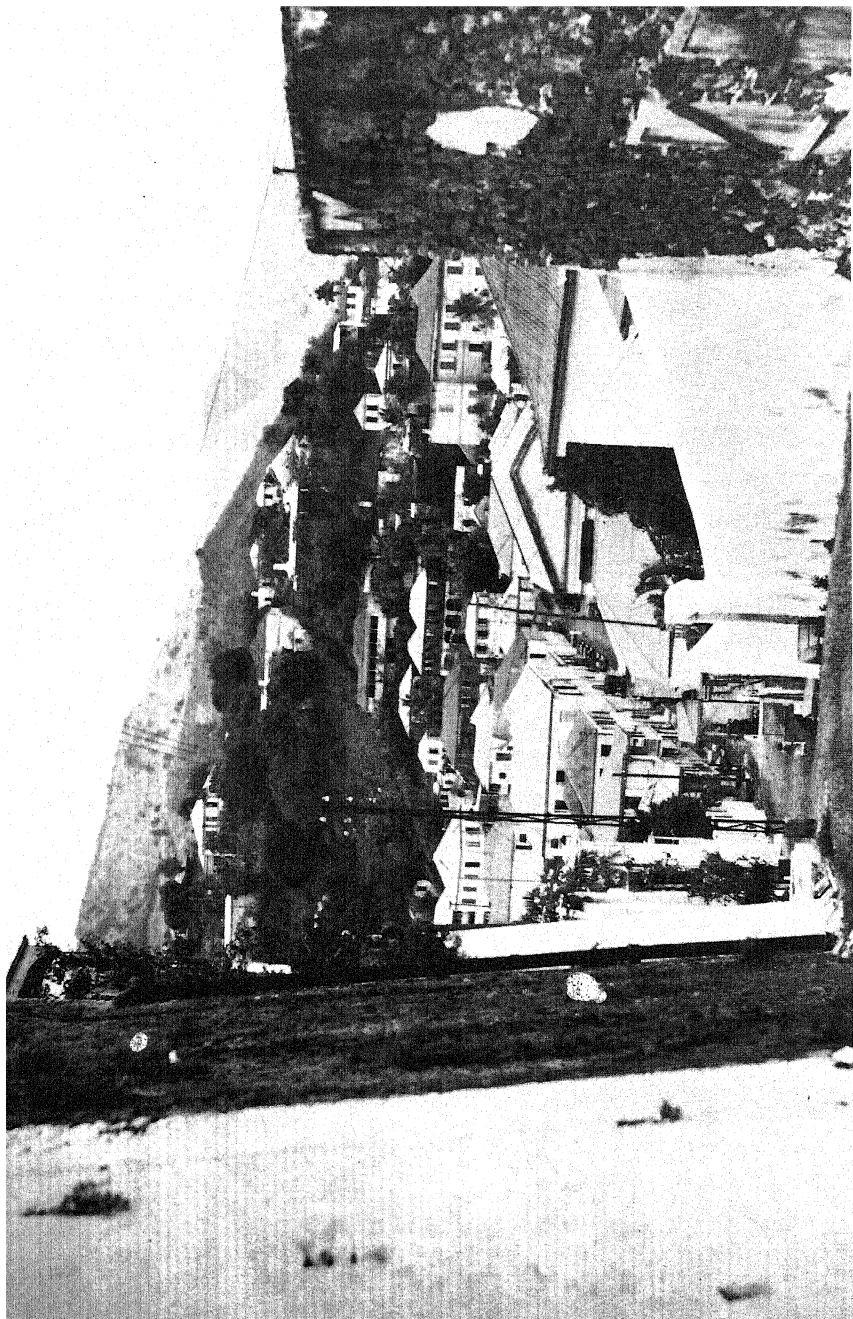
were tied up in the conduct of the war in Europe. She had her hands full to keep herself supplied, let alone to send out men and materials for the establishment of distant naval bases of doubtful value. Yet even had she purchased the islands, she could not have held them. The Allies, from their own adjacent territories, would have gobbled them up in no time. It would have been like putting money in the pockets of their enemies. Hence the only conclusion possible is that a frightened Congress was stampeded into the purchase, at an exorbitant price, of territory which we did not want by nothing more than a false alarm.

From the very beginning the islands, because of their poverty, were a problem. President Hoover, visiting them in 1931, spoke slightly of them as "an effective poorhouse." At that time, in order to vote, a native was required to have a total income of \$300 per year, or a property income of \$60 per year in Saint Croix, or of \$140 per year in Saint Thomas. Whether or not one is an admirer of Mr. Hoover, the fact that at that time barely ten per cent of the population was qualified, under the property restrictions, to vote is evidence that the President hit the nail on the head. This does not, however, mean that they must always remain in that unenviable state.

Successive administrations have endeavored in many ways to solve the problem of how to make the islands self-supporting. In 1934 the Virgin Islands Company was established. This is a Government owned corporation, established under the National Recovery program, "for the purpose of relieving the widespread and chronic unemployment of a stranded community without capital resources through the industrial development of the islands in general and through the rehabilitation of agriculture and of the sugar and rum industries of Saint Croix in particular." According to former Governor Pearson's report of 1934, this "is a partnership program by which the Government of the United States and the people of the Virgin Islands cooperate in a long range social, economic, and industrial program, the profits being available in the islands for educational and social purposes." It is yet early to judge the full effects



Sloops from the surrounding islands discharge their cargoes at Tortola Wharf in Charlotte Amalie.



Charlotte Amalie is built on hills.

of this program, but so far the results have been somewhat disappointing to many.

In addition to the Virgin Islands Company a homesteading project has been inaugurated, somewhat similar to that of the PRRA in Puerto Rico. This has met with some success. The reestablishment of the rum industry has helped greatly, and promises much for the future. Saint Croix has an agricultural experiment station somewhat similar to that in Mayaguez, but lacking that institution's facilities and scope. Given wider facilities and support this station might well be instrumental in discovering and introducing new high value crops, suitable to the islands' peculiar conditions, as the Mayaguez station has done in Puerto Rico.

Important though all these things are, however, it has come to be more and more generally recognized in recent years that the island's one white hope lies in the tourist trade: and by "tourist trade" is meant that class of tourist who comes to spend a season rather than a day. For the tourist who is looking for an ideal spot in which to spend a winter they are the end of the rainbow—or could be. They are rugged and picturesque. The climate is perfect. Rainy days are rare, yet the heat of the sun's rays is tempered by a steady breeze. One could not ask for finer bathing. The local waters abound in fish: mackerel, amberjack, kingfish, barracuda, tuna, grouper, yellow-tail, jewfish, grunts and snappers, hardly a one of which has been educated to the ways of sports fishermen. But, with all this, they have one great drawback: they lack accommodations.

Much drivel has been written concerning our "island paradise." Some writers have implied that one needs only a hammock and a book of essays to retire there. One slings one's hammock, so they say, between two coconut palms, and retires to it with the book of essays propped upon one's chest. Food is obtained simply by plucking breadfruit or bananas from the surrounding trees without so much as stirring from the hammock. One writer has gone so far as to state that you may live like a prince for as little as fifty dollars a month. This is a plain unvarnished lie, and has caused the authorities no end of trouble by attracting people who can neither afford to

stay nor afford the price of a ticket back home. If one were willing to accept the very low standard of living of the bulk of the black population he could live for very little. It is doubtful, however, if one would be allowed to do so!

The truth is that it costs just about as much to live in the islands as anywhere else. Food, all of which must be imported, is high. Fresh vegetables are rare. Transportation, which must be considered because of the distance of the beaches from town, is also high. Liquor, if one requires it, is low due to the fact that the islands are practically a free port. Help is low, and is capable of being trained. Rents, because of the scarcity of accommodations, are relatively high. Thus, in the long run, one's living expenses average about what they would at home.

Houses are extremely scarce, and most of these are occupied by officers of the Marine Air Station and their families. What few are likely to be available are inadequately furnished. On Saint John there are only two small boarding houses, run by natives, two small but modern cottages for which high rents are asked, and one private residence which may sometimes be rented. Saint Thomas has a very limited number of houses in Charlotte Amalie, two hotels, of limited capacity, and two or three houses which accept paying guests. Saint Croix has two boarding house-hotels, one in Christiansted and one in Fredericksted. Their prices are reasonable, and their board is fair, but they are unable to accommodate more than a few guests at a time.

In addition to this, the islands are difficult to reach. One line, The Furness-West Indies Line, serves them directly from New York. Their ships sail every two weeks in the winter season and once a month in the summer. But their space is naturally limited, and, as they serve all the islands down to Trinidad and Demerara, they naturally prefer to sell space for the round trip and will sometimes refuse to book passage only as far as Saint Thomas. Also, because theirs is the only regular sailing they are apt to be booked up far in advance. One other line, The American Caribbean Line, runs an occasional freighter with limited passenger accommodation from New York. There is regular twice weekly service between Saint Thomas, Saint Croix, and San Juan, by the comfortable S.S. *Catherine* of the

Bull Insular Line, and this is by far the most popular and convenient method of reaching the islands. They may also be reached from Europe and from the West Coast of North America by the ships of the Danish East Asiatic Line. Planes of the Pan American Airways call once a week each way to and from San Juan, and there was a Puerto Rican plane service in the process of organization at the time this was written.

This transportation service, while it is adequate for most ordinary purposes, cannot take care of the growing demand for accommodations to and from the islands. Thus, it is evident that if the islands are ever to become the tourist center that it is hoped they may some day be, a number of things must first be done. An extensive building program should be undertaken to provide both more adequate hotel accommodation and a number of small modern bungalows for the accommodation of those who wish to do their own housekeeping. These last should be adequately furnished. Wells should be driven to provide plumbing facilities. Golf courses and tennis courts and bathhouses should be built to provide recreational inducements. When this is done, and adequately publicized, it will be easier to induce steamship companies to inaugurate new services to the islands to meet the increased demand for transportation.

There are many pessimists, both in the islands and out, who shake their heads over such a program and say it cannot be done. The only answer to these is to point to what has been done with Bermuda. Before the war Bermuda was little better off than the Virgin Islands. Today Bermuda accommodates thousands of tourists every year and derives an enormous revenue from them. The Virgin Islands have more in the way of natural advantages—climate, scenery, etc.—than Bermuda ever has had or ever will have. Once the advantages of the islands become generally known on the mainland, once the industry receives that boost which it needs from the Federal Government, and which it must have if the Virgins are ever to become self-supporting, the trade will thrive and doubters will be confounded. The islands will come into their own as a winter playground, and will assume a well-deserved place as an American rival of Bermuda, Jamaica and the Bahamas.

SAINT THOMAS AND SAINT JOHN

Chapter XIII

COLUMBUS, beating northward from Saint Croix, four hundred years and more ago, came in sight of "a great cluster of islands, some verdant and covered with forests, but the greater part naked and sterile, rising into craggy mountains; with rocks of a bright azure color and some of glistening white." With the exception of the "bright azure" rocks, which seem in the meantime to have disappeared, the islands present much the same appearance to the modern traveler as they did to their discoverer so many years ago.

Sunrise is apt to find the ship coming in slowly off the western end of the group; for captains like to make port in the early morning. Close abeam lies brown and barren Savana Island, showing no single sign of life. Beyond, the emerald seas wash gently in and out among a group of lesser cays and islets. Dutchman Cap rises in the distance. Salt Cay, West Cay, Kalkun Cay and Saltwater Money lie closer at hand; and close to these rise the steep, scrub-covered slopes of Saint Thomas itself. The deep-flanked gullies that run down to the heads of the little bays still lie in purple shadows. But the high-crested ridges that end in steep headlands, poking out to sea like stubby fingers, are touched with golden highlights of the sun's early rays. Clothed in the dusty green of acacia and thorn, they look barren, desolate and disappointing; not at all tropical. Without casting about consciously for comparisons one thinks instinctively of the bare islands rising off the southern coast of California, or of the African shore as seen from the Straits of Gibraltar.

Ahead lies little Saba. To starboard Sail Rock rises sheer out of

the sea. At a distance one must look twice, even in broad daylight, to be sure it is not some island sloop scudding outward before the wind. Looking at it in the early morning light it is easy to understand the mistake made by the captain of a French frigate during the American Revolution. Sighting the rock from a great distance in the dusk of evening, this gentleman mistook it for a sail and gave chase. Rapidly as he came up with it, however, it was dark before he hove alongside. Seen only by the light of the stars its loom looked more like a ship than ever. The Frenchman hailed it, demanding to know its business in those waters, and the rock walls echoed his hail in unintelligible tones. When the mysterious ship which ran without lights gave no sign of heeding his commands to come about and heave to the Frenchman hauled off and fired a broadside at it. The crags of the rock gave back the echo once again, and some of the shot ricochetting from the cliffs thumped against the Frenchman's sides.

"Sacré nom de dieu!" thought the captain, "the fellow has the effrontery to return my fire. He must be a British man-o-war."

Whereupon he cleared his decks, laid all hands to, and maneuvering brilliantly about his motionless adversary, he poured broadside after broadside upon him. All night long he battered the rock. And all night long the balls from his own cannon bounced back and thudded against the sides of his ship. The fellow was stubborn but he would wear him down! Only when morning came did he realize his mistake and sail away with his ears burning and the crew chuckling behind his back.

At first there is little sign of life on Saint Thomas. Only an occasional building, too distant to appear anything more than box-like from here, shows against the shore line or part way up the hill. Once past Saba we can look up into Mosquito Bay to the flats behind Cabritaberg and make out the huddle of barracks and hangars of the Marine Air Base. But there is yet no sign of the town.

Water Island comes alongside. We pass Flamingo Point and change course, standing in toward shore. Now we can make out the lighthouse and the yellow buildings of the old quarantine station on

Muhlenfels Point, at the entrance to the harbor. As we pass the upper end of Water Island we can look down the East Gregerie Channel and catch a glimpse of a cluster of red roofs. But in the next moment the heights of Hassel Island, which guards the entrance to the harbor, shuts off that view, leaving us only Cowell's Battery on the point and the signal station on the hill to look at. For an instant it seems as though we were heading into a cul-de-sac, but just as Rupert Rock begins to loom uncomfortably close, we round the point of Hassel Island, and the hills of the town begin to unfold before us.

Charlotte Amalie, the capital of the islands, was named for Charlotte Amalia, the consort of Christian V, who ruled Denmark in 1666. Seen from the harbor it is a pretty town, a colorful town, its pink and white and gray and buff buildings under green and red roofs massing along the inner front of the crescent-shaped harbor, and climbing in uneven piles over the three steep hills that jut out buttresslike from the sheer flank of the mountain behind. Foretop, Maintop, and Mizzentop, old sea dogs used to call these three hills. French Hill, Berg Hill, and Government Hill, they are called on the United States Coast and Geodetic Survey map of the island. Frenchman's, Denmark, and Government the natives call them. Sometimes they throw in Synagogue Hill or Blackbeard's Hill, leaving the stranger to judge for himself which is meant. It is all very confusing.

Seen from a ship in the harbor, the coal wharf of the West Indian Company, with its immense traveling cranes, lies on the extreme right separated by some distance from the town itself. Following the line of the road in from the West Indian wharf the eye comes to a low hill crowned by the new white buildings of the government owned Bluebeard's Castle Hotel, huddled about the ancient tower from which it takes its name. Next to the left, across a hollow, comes Government Hill, topped by another grim old tower, Blackbeard's Castle. At the foot of Government Hill rise the spidery towers of the Naval Radio Station, in whose shadow lie the weathered, red brick walls of old Christiansfort looking out serenely across the harbor. Next to the fort, a spot of green against the white of the buildings behind, is Emancipation Park, in the shadow of whose whispering

trees was read the proclamation of the transfer of the islands from the sovereignty of Denmark to that of the United States. Passing on to the left lies another hollow called "the gut," and beyond that the tumbled rooftops rise again on Denmark Hill. Beyond Denmark is another hollow and Frenchmen's Hill. At the extreme left, in a sort of saddle between hills lies the French settlement, known locally as "Chachatown." Beyond Chachatown a steep knoll, Careen Hill, closes off the harbor to westward. Around its foot a narrow channel called the Styx runs into East Gregerie Channel and separates the island of Saint Thomas from Hassel Island.

Some ships entering the harbor lie alongside the coal wharf. This is convenient, but prosaic, and one will have to hire a taxi to reach the town. Other ships lie out in the harbor. No sooner has one of these dropped anchor than a swarm of small boats creeps out from shore to meet her. Black urchins paddle ingenious contrivances fashioned of kerosene tins flattened and soldered about a light wooden frame. They clamor for nickels and dimes for which to dive. More substantial boats cluster about the swaying accommodation ladder, fighting for place and bidding for passengers who wish to be taken ashore.

The boats deposit one at the King's Wharf, at the foot of Emancipation Park. A stalwart, blue-clad, black policeman is stationed at the wharf to see that none of the white millionaires cheat the boatmen—though he may have received his orders in reverse. A cluster of small blacks, barefoot and ragged, also wait at the landing to stretch a grimy hand to the landing stranger and, with one eye on the policeman, mumble in scarcely audible tones, "Please, mister, gimme penny?" If one runs the gauntlet and pays them no attention they soon leave, running back to the waterside to greet the next boatload of incoming passengers. But if they receive the least attention, even if one but asks what they say, they will raise the ante: "Please, boss, gimme nickel. I'se so hongry!" They are not as importunate here as in Puerto Rico, however, unless one has arrived by one of the occasional floating palaces which now and then make the island a cruise stop. In this case whole families, urchins, cripples,

aged and able-bodied, beggars and touts and venders of all manner of souvenirs, postcards, peanuts and fruits, declare a field day and overrun the town. If one comes from Puerto Rico one misses the lottery sellers. The islands have their own lottery, lately legalized, but the tickets are on sale only at certain designated stations.

Having safely avoided the hazards of the waterfront, one has opportunity to stop and look about. To the left of the park, abutting on the water, and looking out upon the landing place, is a modern gray structure, housing the shop of the Virgin Islands Cooperative, where native basketry, hats, mats, needlework and other sundries are offered for sale at absurdly reasonable prices. The same building houses the offices of the Virgin Islands Tourist Company—not to be confused, though it frequently is, with the Virgin Islands Company—and a cable office. Behind this lies the new post office and Federal Building. Directly across the park, on a small knoll, is the little castellated red brick fort, looking as if it had been cut out of cardboard. The date over the gateway and under the clock reads 1671, but the best authorities say that the fort was not completed until 1680. Père Labat, writing at the opening of the eighteenth century, speaks of it. "There is a small fort in the center of the bay," he says, "with three little bastions but no ditch or outside fortifications except a belt of prickly pears about forty feet wide. The prickly pears are so well-looked-after and so thick that one would think they were trimmed every day. The buildings in the fort are built against the walls so as to leave a square in the center." Today the prickly pears are gone, but the fort and the buildings within remain as they were two hundred and fifty years ago when the fort was completed. The fort serves now as police station, jail, and police court.

The park itself, lying between the fort and the post office, is neat and pleasant. Tamarind, tibet, mahogany and other trees shade its criss-crossed walks, and old cannon, stood upright on their muzzles, mark its corners. In the center is a bronze bust of Christian IX of Denmark, with the inscription—"Fodt 8 April 1818, Konge 15 March 1863, Dod 29 January 1907."

If one is stopping in Saint Thomas, rather than going on to other

ports with the ship, this much will be seen in passing. The first thought will be to find suitable lodging. One has the choice of two hotels. The Grand, facing the third side of Emancipation Park, is comfortable and reasonable, though on account of its location in the center of town somewhat inclined to be noisy. The fare is good, and the pleasant dining veranda looks over the tops of the trees in the park to the harbor beyond.

On the hill at the eastern end of town is the new and extremely attractive Bluebeard's Castle Hotel. Built by the Government in 1934, this is a modern hotel in every sense and it is furnished accordingly. The rates here run considerably higher than those at the Grand, but the house is comfortable and the view from its terrace is magnificent. At the time the hotel was built, a number of cottages were put up in connection with it on the surrounding hillsides. Originally these were intended to accommodate winter tourists. As it happens, however, they are extremely hard to get as they were snapped up as fast as they were completed by Government officials and other more permanent residents.

The squat old tower from which the hotel takes its name, together with the other picturesque old structure, Blackbeard's Castle, crowning the nearby Government Hill has been a source of much mental anguish to many a would-be legend-builder. Blackbeard's has the shadow of a possibility of truth to lend a certain substance to the rather dull legends that have been woven about its grim walls. Tradition has it that here Teach, the pirate Blackbeard, retired from his pirating to store his ill-got gains and murder a baker's dozen of tiresome wives. That Teach was well acquainted with the harbor of Saint Thomas is an established fact. Whether or not he ever had anything to do with the gaunt tower that bears his name is not so certain. One thing is sure: He never retired there to live upon the plunder of his pirate days, for he was killed in battle when he and his cutthroat crew fell in with a King's Sloop which was on the lookout for him in Pamlico Sound on the coast of North Carolina. Bluebeard's on the other hand has not even this questionable ground upon which to base its tales. As a result the fanciful tale of a desperate French pirate

named Barbe-bleue and his Spanish wench who poisoned all the local ladies whom she believed to be her lover's paramours, falls desperately flat. It lacks the true romantic ring which all such tales must have to make them authentic. The only mystery about Bluebeard's Castle is how it came to bear the name it does.

But if the legends that have grown up about these two old towers are disappointing, the truth, at least, is amusing. Blackbeard's, it seems was built first, in 1674, by one Carl Baggaert. As the tower occupied the summit of the hill directly overlooking the as yet incomplete fort below, the governor was constrained to object strenuously to Copenhagen concerning it. "It is not meet that this Baggaert should build his house so much higher than the fort," he said, "for everyone who comes to see him completely overlooks me."

To modern ears that sounds like the pompous protest of an inflated ego. There was something in what the governor said, however, for this Baggaert was a troublemaker, a leader of the opposition, one might say, and it is to be feared that "everyone who came to see him" was not always everything that an honest man should be. It would appear that the governor had cause to feel uncomfortable. Nothing was done about it immediately, beyond completing the fort at the foot of the hill. It is interesting to note, however, that in 1689 the Government built the fort which today is called Bluebeard's Castle upon another hilltop. In that day it was called Fredericksfort, and it was not until 1818 that it fell into private hands. Much as one regrets to say so, it is strongly to be feared that, with the rates which the present hotel is charging for its accommodations, the old Castle is nearer today to piracy than ever before in its career!

Charlotte Amalie's one long main street runs parallel with the bay front, though separated from it by a row of grizzled, thick-walled warehouses, eloquent relics of a bygone day. Starting at the foot of Bluebeard's Hill, it dodges about the foot of Government and Denmark Hills, and finally ducks between Frenchmen's Hill and Chachatown, past the cemetery, and escapes into the open country. In the variety of names which it bears it is almost as confusing as are the hills behind it. Walking along it, one still sees the old Danish street signs

tacked to the houses at the corners, but these seem to disagree somewhat. One announces that this is the Norre Gade. A little further along one bears the legend Kronprindsen's Gade. Another offers Kongens Gade. Several more at intervals call it Droningens Gade. It is like the Grands Boulevards in Paris in that one never knows from one block to the next what street one is on. The story that is told to explain this confusion is that in former times the town was divided into three sections—King's, Queen's, and Crown Prince's—and that portion of the main street which passed through each section, there bore the name of the section. Later this became confusing, and a single name was officially applied to the whole. In fact over a course of years two or three single names appear to have been applied to the whole, so that now no one seems to know just what to call it. Nearly everyone compromises by simply calling it "Main Street."

Behind this principal thoroughfare the town rises steeply on its three hillsides. Straight up from Emancipation Park, past the entrance to the Grand Hotel, a flight of uneven steps leads upward, beside a low garden wall over hung with red and purple Bougainvillea, and lined with oleander and hibiscus and a creeping shrub bearing bright yellow flowers. At the top of the steps is a large white, weathered house across whose front is the sign, "Hotel 1829." Once this house shared the hotel honors of the town with the Grand below, but today it stands empty and abandoned, its doors and windows boarded and shuttered, an incongruous sight in a town so in need of tourist accommodation.

Right from the 1829 House a straight street runs eastward across the shoulder of the hill past the pink and white, high-balconied front of Government House. Behind Government House, and between it and the 1829 House, long flights of worn steps lead upward to the top of the hill between walls over whose tops peep nodding palms and bright clusters of flowers. This is the most closely settled portion of the town, and the pink and white and blue houses, each with its spacious veranda overlooking the harbor below, its pleasant shaded garden space, and its cool green jalousies, climb in tiers, one above an-

other, to the summit of the hill. Below, to the left of the 1829 House, and back from it, lies the gut, a poor section, ramshackle, somewhat distressed-seeming, criss-crossed with narrow alleys that run nearly level for a space and then shoot wildly up the steep hillsides that lie behind it and on either side. Beyond the gut lies Denmark Hill, similar to Government Hill in character, except that here the long flights of steps give way to narrow winding picturesque streets.

It is interesting to poke about in these back sections of the town, but the life of the place swirls back and forth along the length of the main street near the waterfront. Here the town's business is carried on. Here are the shops and warehouses, the banks and steamship agencies, the open market shed in which native black women nod and gossip over small piles of fruits and vegetables. Short side streets lead down at intervals between warehouses to the waterfront. One such leads to picturesque Tortola Wharf, where the island sloops tie up to discharge their cargoes of fish and charcoal and produce. There are always a half a dozen or more of them bobbing at their moorings at the end of the dock.

The shops carry an amazing assortment of wares. The local drug-store also sells souvenirs and groceries and is a bar besides. Other shops sell everything from anchors to silk thread and from charcoal pots to dry goods to antiques. Now and again a shop specializes in shoes, wines and groceries, hardware, jewelry, or baskets, but for the most part stores are general. In addition to the ordinary run of shops there are the gift shops specializing in Danish silver, glass and pottery, perfumes, and such. Because Saint Thomas is virtually a free port prices in these shops are much lower than one would expect to find them, and it is well worth one's while to do one's souvenir- and gift-shopping here.

But though these shops are of specific interest, of more general interest is the life that flows around one as one walks the length of the main street. One cannot be in Saint Thomas for five minutes without coming forcibly to the realization that this is a black man's country. On the street scarcely one in ten faces one meets are white. Ninety per cent and more of the population of the islands is black or

colored or light tan. By far the greater proportion of the islands' business is done by blacks: educated, courteous, gentlemanly people for the most part, but little different, save in the color of their skins, from the bulk of business men in the United States. In the higher brackets a few among them, notably politicians, and the like, are trouble-makers. No one considers them inferior, yet an inbred inferiority complex leads this particular few to place a chip upon their shoulder and adopt a truculent air towards the whites who are stationed among them. This is doubly unfortunate in that it draws for them a certain following among the more ignorant colored and black people—the distinction is their own—as well as in that it leads the more impatient whites to assume that theirs is the attitude of all “niggers.”

In general, however, the bulk of the people—the charcoal-makers, the fishermen, the field hands and the dock-workers, and such—are simple colored folk; not so carefree and happy-go-lucky as our own southern Negroes, perhaps, somewhat more inclined to turn sulky or have their feelings hurt, and tending towards meanness when aroused, yet on the whole more intelligent and thoughtful and much more independent. If one goes half way to meet them on their own ground they become willing workers after their own lights and faithful friends.

There is another element which one meets walking the streets of Saint Thomas that is of interest. Some of the whites one sees are tall, thin, sallowed-faced men and women, remarkable mostly for the high-crowned straw hats they wear. These are the Chachas, inhabitants of the squalid huddle of huts clustered about the big church on the knoll at the western end of the town. Speak to them in English and they will stare at you, gloomily, uncomprehending. But address them in French, and their faces will light up in a hollow smile, and they will answer. For these people are French.

Tradition has it that these are the last of a flock of Huguenots who fled from France centuries ago to escape persecution. More likely they were simply emigres from St. Barts and other nearby French islands. No one knows for certain who they are or whence

they came. One thing is certain, they have kept their stock pure, untinged by a single drop of negro blood. Also they are Catholics to a man, and it would seem that had they ever been protestants there would probably be some protestants among them now. Those who live at the Carenage, as Chachatown is more officially known, subsist by fishing. There is another colony of them upon the mountainside behind the city and on the north slope of St. Peter Mountain, and these are farmers.

One who wishes to see the island thoroughly will find it worth while to hire a car. This will involve considerable bargaining and loss of temper, not to mention a careful study of the excellent map of the island obtainable at the harbormaster's office, for the native drivers prefer to ride about town, and are not helpful with suggestions. Fortunately there are not many roads on the island, passable for automobiles, and these may be covered in the space of a few hours.

West from town the main road leads out past Nisky, an old Moravian mission, with its yellow, red-roofed buildings set picturesquely against the bare hillside. Beyond Nisky a side road, left, little more than a rain-washed gully, leads down to the shores of Krum Bay which has long been a graveyard for condemned vessels of all sorts and descriptions. Here the old ships were hauled and dismantled and their hulks left to rot. To this day their bleached ribs and timbers litter the shore and rise above the surface of the bay.

Beyond this point the road winds down through scrub growth to the flat at the head of Mosquito—now called Lindbergh—Bay, and the Marine Air Base. Once the landing field was a golf course, and folders advertising the attractions of the island still list golf as one of the sports which may be enjoyed. Leave your clubs at home, however, for today there is no golf course in the Virgin Islands.

Next beyond Lindbergh—or Mosquito—Bay lies Brewer's Bay, where there are a fine beach and bathhouses, the property of a local beach club which gladly extends a welcome to visitors. After Brewer's Bay the paved road ends, and the track, for it can be dignified by no other name, continues, incredibly rough and incredibly steep, up

the mountain-side to Estate Bonne Esperance, affording magnificent vistas south and west over the rugged shore.

From this point we must retrace our steps to town. Near Nisky a somewhat better road turns off into the hills, climbing past the ruins of an old windmill at Contant to the saddle between Hawk and Crown Mountains, and affording views similar to that which we obtained from the lower road. From town a third road winds west, back of the West Indian Company's dock, over the hills to the old quarantine station, now a club, at Muhlenfel's Point. West of the point, and directly beneath the clubhouse veranda lies Morningstar Bay with one of the finest and most accessible beaches on the island. Other fine beaches are at Magen's Bay and Smith's Bay on the north side of the island. At any of these beaches one may bathe safely without fear of shark or barracuda, in cool green water as clear as the air one breathes. There is no surf anywhere among these islands, save on the rocky headlands. Nor are the beaches apt to be crowded. Rather it will be the exceptional day when one has not the entire strand to himself.

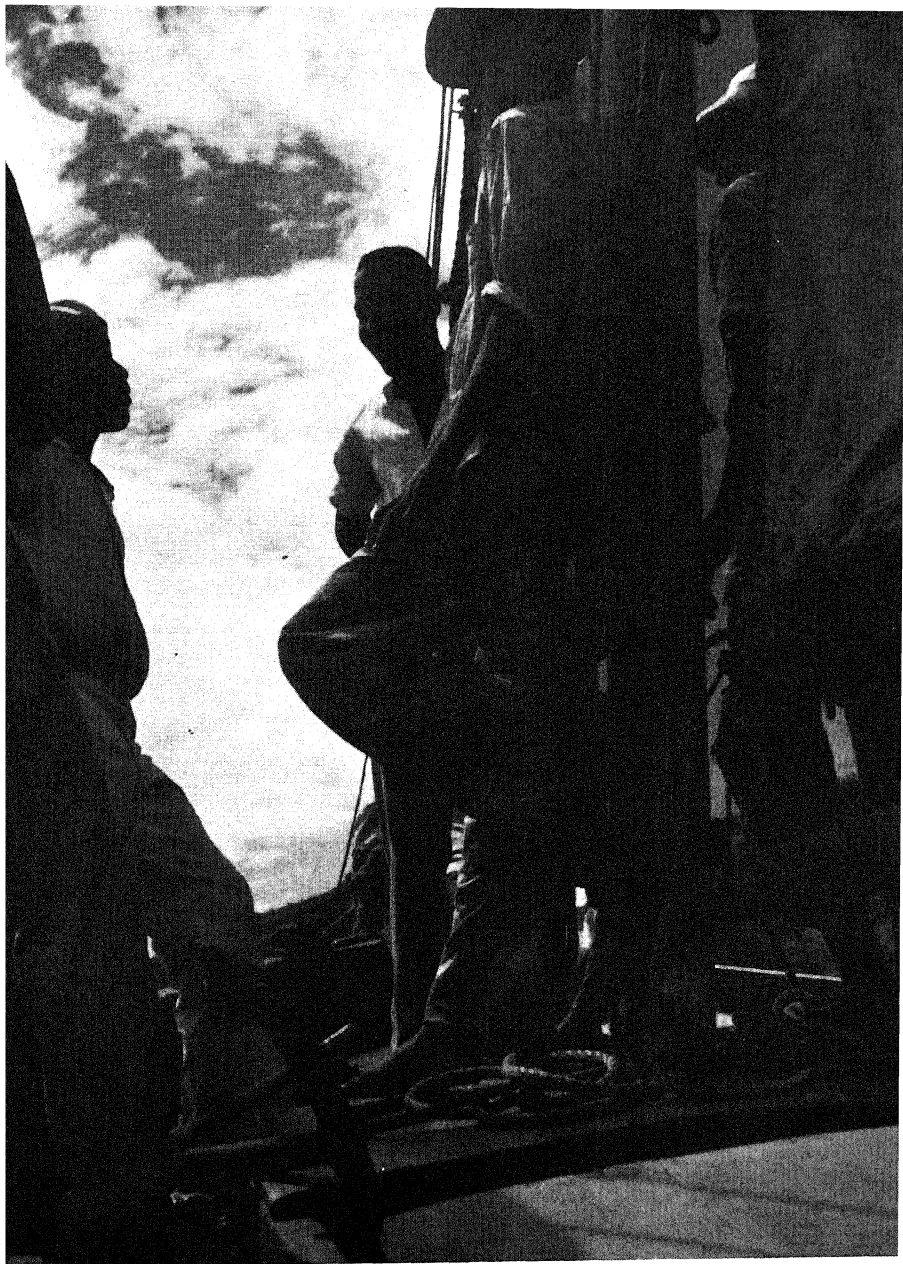
Back again in town, still another road winds up the steep slope behind the city to the ridge above. Two private estates occupy the crest of the ridge, but between them lies an outlook that is well worth the slight scramble to reach.

Here, for the first time, it is borne in forcibly upon the stranger how unbelievably narrow the island is. Standing on the summit of the ridge and gazing southward one looks seaward over Muhlenfel's Point and Water Island to the distant hills of Saint Croix, lying low along the horizon. At one's feet the mountain drops away sharply to the roofs of the city below. From this height it looks like a red and white cardboard village spread out across a miniature landscape by the hand of some artistic window-dresser. The harbor, in its sheltering ring of encircling hills, looks like a sheet of green bottle glass, and the ships that ride upon its surface look like toys.

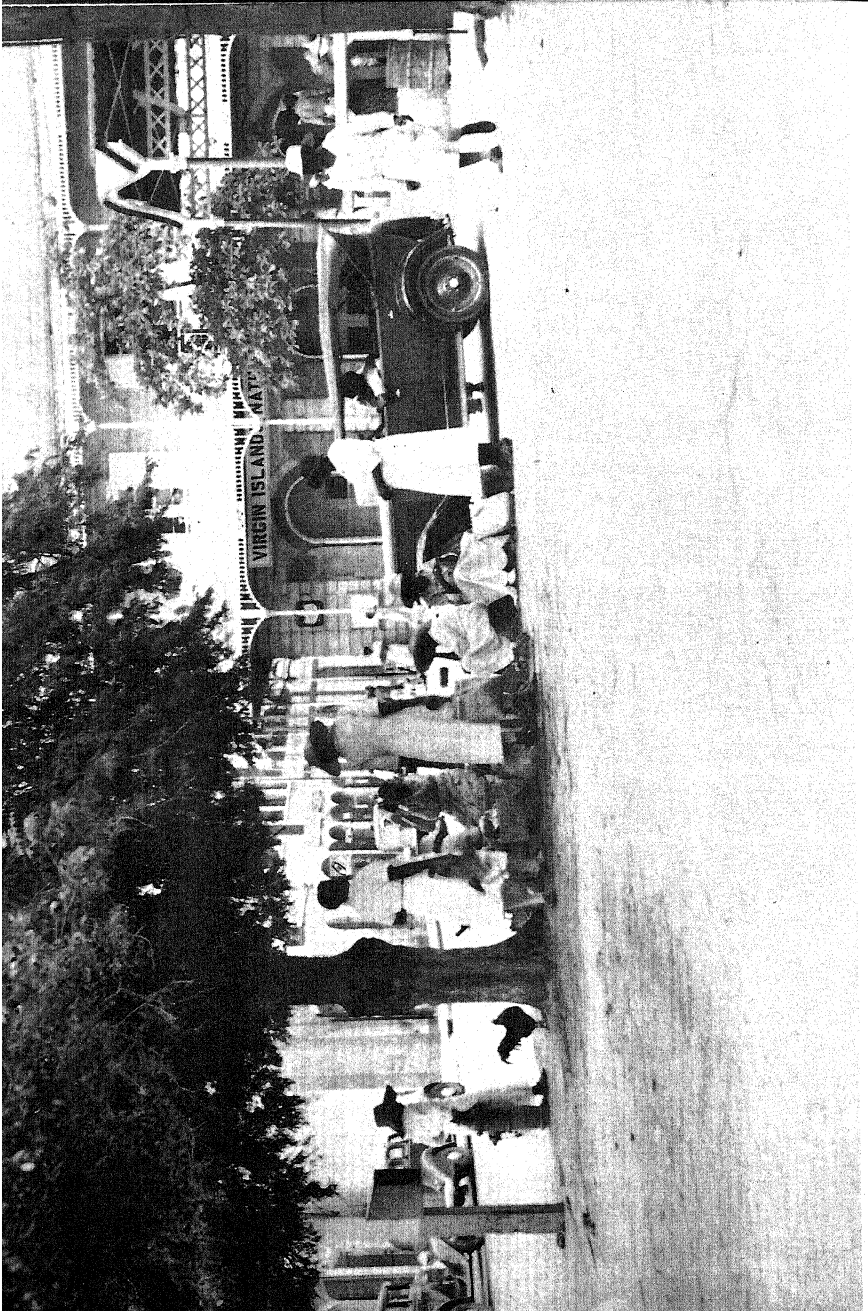
Turning around and looking north and eastward the island's flanks again drop sheer away before us to the sea. Here, however, they are green and wooded. Looking down across them we can catch an occa-

sional glimpse of the road that winds down across them to Magen's Bay, passing on the way Estate Canaan, where Jean Christophe, one time Black Emperor of Haiti, is said to have labored as a slave in the days before his escape. Magen's Bay itself lies at our feet, here light emerald green, here a darker emerald, and out beyond the deepest ultramarine. At the head of the rectangular bay lies a clean white strip of sand beach, with behind it the dark, cool, green of a big coconut grove. Beyond Magen's, beyond the long, narrow spit of Picara Point, lie the sparkling blue waters of the Atlantic, dotted to north and east and southeast by a veritable tangle of islands. Hans Lollik, with Little Hans Lollik peeping over its shoulder, lies just off the tip of Picara Point. Beyond them lie Tobago and Little Tobago, and beyond again looms Jost Van Dyke, one time home of Dr. William Thornton, the designer of the Capitol at Washington. There are no white inhabitants upon it now. Far away to the westward looms the shaggy shoulder of Tortola, with Great Thatch Island lying just in front. Closer at hand, seeming almost a continuation of Saint Thomas itself, rise the steep, wooded slopes of Saint John. This outlook alone is worth all the journeying to Saint Thomas to see.

One may reach Saint John directly from Saint Thomas harbor by chartering an island sloop for a matter of four or five dollars and beating along the south shore to the Current Hole between Great Saint James Island and Water Point, and thence around Cabrita Point and across Pillsbury Sound to Cruz Bay. But this is likely to be a long pull, for the northeast winds blow steadily across the Sound, and the island sloops notoriously do not run well to windward. There are stories current on the island of sloops that have taken twelve hours and more to make the three-mile journey between Saint Thomas and Saint John, and while these are told as great jokes, it does not seem to be an uncommon event. Consequently, if time is short, one will be well advised to forego the pleasure of riding an island sloop, on the outward journey at least, and trust one's self to the more prosaic but surer motor launch *Flamingo*, which twice and sometimes three times each week makes the journey between Red Hook Bay on the eastern



Virgin Islanders.



A corner of Saint Thomas' Market.

end of Saint Thomas, and Cruz and Caneel Bays on the west end of Saint John.

Red Hook Bay is reached by private bus, for which one makes arrangements at the Grand Hotel or at the Virgin Islands Tourist Company office facing Emancipation Park. The bus, the hotel, the *Flamingo*, the Maison Danoise in Charlotte Amalie and a large slice of Saint John at Caneel Bay, all belong to the Virgin Islands Tourist Company, which, in turn, is closely connected with the West Indian Company.

The hotel bus takes us out of the town as far as the West Indian docks, and there bears to the left soon climbing by steep grades and tortuous curves into the hills in the center of the island. The road winds eastward among the low hills for some distance, passing on the way the old Moravian mission at New Hernhutt, the first mission established by this sect in the new world, founded in 1732. Beyond that there is a large cattle-raising estate at Tutu. A little beyond Tutu we come out suddenly between the hills on to the northeastern slope of the island, to see the broad sparkling expanse of Pillsbury Sound spreading below, and in the distance, seen now for the first time in full view, the high, wooded slopes of Saint John, rising from the blue waters. From here the road drops swiftly towards the sea, picks a winding way through a scrubby tangle of mangrove and sea grape, and arrives presently at the landing stage in Red Hook Bay.

Here, if we are lucky, big, broad, black, grinning Ishmael Marsh, member of a prominent Saint John clan, and skipper of the *MY. Flamingo*, will be waiting for us—and for the mail. Only pompousness entitles the dumpy *Flamingo* to the title “Motor Yacht.” With her high white sides and squat yellow exhaust funnel set atop her deckhouse she looks more like a bastard cross between a Boston Common’s swan boat and a Staten Island ferry. She is Ishmael’s pride and joy, however, and he makes her go. As we shall presently discover, she is by no means uncomfortable.

Once mail and passengers are aboard and the various commissions which the inhabitants of Saint John have entrusted to Ishmael are attended to, we are away, and the *Flamingo* sputters out between Red

Hook and Cabrita Point into the sweep of the wind across Pillsbury Sound.

It takes twenty minutes to cross to Cruz Bay, and we have ample time to look about us. Overhead great high-piled, West Indian cumulus clouds stand out like motionless heaps of cotton against the deep blue of the sky. Now and again a white burst of spray sweeps across the forward deck. Northward rises Thatch Cay, named, so tradition has it for Teach the Blackbeard, "Thatch" being one of his many aliases. Next to Thatch lies Grass Cay, then Mingo, then Lovango, with Jost Van Dyke and Tobago rising beyond. Southward lie Great and Little Saint James and Dog Island, and beyond them the open Caribbean. Astern looms Saint Thomas, enormous when seen from this angle. Forward, athwart the course rises Saint John. If one has a line it is worth while to troll it, for mackerel and barracuda and sometimes amberjack run down through the passages between the Cays, and one is almost certain to pick up something.

Cruz Bay, approached from the water, looks like a movie set for a South Sea Isle. Two or three rakish-looking sloops lie moored at the end of a short dock which juts out from a palm-fringed beach. Back among the palms one catches a glimpse of a roof or two, the only sign beside the dock and the white bulk of Government House, looming high upon a rocky point, that there is a settlement beyond. A score of tiny houses and a small store make up the village. Despite the goats and chickens and pigs and donkeys that wander at will in the dusty lanes the place has an air of spotless cleanliness. The natives are affable and courteous and good-natured—much more so than those of Saint Thomas, and they greet one pleasantly: "Give yo' good day, sar," or "Give yo' good day, mist'ess." Moorhead, a fine, tall, old colored gentleman is pleased to see us. He runs the boarding house just up from the dock, and has the best the island has to offer in the line of accommodation, though if one is planning to stay with him it is well to write ahead, as he is often crowded for space. Probably Doctor Hughes, the commissioner, is down to meet the boat. He, too is pleasant and cordial, and is glad to welcome strangers for this is a lonely post for him and Mrs. Hughes.

We will come back to Cruz Bay to spend a day or two, but just now we are to ride around with the *Flamingo* to Caneel Bay. Mail and supplies are put ashore, and once more we are off, putt-putting around the point to northward into the next bay.

It does not take long to round the point. As we clear it another white sand beach comes into view, lined this time with low-lying sea grape, and with a somewhat longer and higher dock jutting out into the bay. On the hillside to the right, above the bay we can see two small cottages. These constitute as yet Saint John's only deliberate move to attract the tourist trade. Each consists of two bedrooms and a bath, and each is equipped with a detached kitchen. They belong to the West Indian Company, and the rates for them are one hundred dollars per month—and up.

As we step ashore upon the firm white sand, washed ever so gently by the crystal-clear waters of the bay, we are forced to admit that this beach alone is very nearly worth the price they ask for the cottages. But it is neither beach nor cottages the we have come to see. Across the hollow behind the beach and straggling up the hill beyond lie the ruins of a once-great sugar estate. Near the foot of the hill stand the thick roofless walls and the chimney of what was once the cane mill. Further up, near the top are the walls of the great house and of several outbuildings. A little further yet stands the modern house of the West Indian Company's overseer. Standing in the hollow, and looking up at the old ruins, it is easy to picture the activity that must once have found its center here. In those days the flat behind the house and the whole bowl of the hills beyond must have been covered with the waving green of the cane. Up on the hillsides black slaves worked at the cutting in the hot sun. High-wheeled ox carts, heavily laden with the long green stalks rumbled down from the fields to the mill. Inside the mill the great rollers rumbled as they crushed the juice from the fresh cane. Up on the veranda of the great house the planter and his family took life easy in immaculate white. Only the overseers bothered their heads to see that the blacks were working as they should. The planters them-

selves visited back and forth and fished and gamed and hunted wood doves in the bush, and in general lived a life of comfortable ease.

There is a story to tell about Caneel Bay—or, rather, there is a story to tell about Saint John which involves a story of Caneel Bay; and it is this which has brought us here now.

Saint John was settled in 1717. "I have planted the flag of our most gracious King," wrote Governor Eric Bredal in his report to the Company directors, "and then we feasted, and drank the health, first of our Sovereign and then of the Company. Later I selected a place on which to build a fort, a convenient location which commands the inlet to the harbor as well as the harbor itself, and a level space beneath it on which a village can stand. The harbor is quite secure, and when a person is within it—he sees land all about him. I have permitted the planters to indicate which pieces of land they prefer and have selected a place for the Company's plantation, just a cannon shot from the fort."

The site which Governor Bredal selected was an excellent one. It lay near the eastern end of the island in an inner pocket of the large U-shaped scallop in the island's coast line known today as Coral Bay. The eastern side of this bay is formed by a rugged, three-mile finger of land, known locally as the "East End," which juts south-eastward into Sir Francis Drake Channel and over looks the steep, craggy shores of British Tortola, scarcely a stone's throw away. On the west the Bay is closed in by the towering heights of the Bordeaux Mountains, the highest peaks on the island. Within the enclosing circle of these shores, a stumpy peninsula thrusts southward into the wide bay, and it was atop the round knoll in which this peninsula ends that Governor Bredal proposed to build his fort.

Such a fort would look down into the little harbor at the upper end of which the plantation was to stand: the harbor of which Bredal said that "when a person is within it—he sees land all about him." On the other hand the fort would look down into a second land-locked bay, whose shores were scalloped by a half a dozen tiny coves, a fit place for vessels to take shelter from the dread hurricanes which



For the most part Saint John's shore is rugged.



At Leinster Bay, Saint John, British Tortola lies but a stone's throw away.

sometimes sweep over these islands, and hence from that day to this known as the Hurricane Hole. In addition to this the fort so located would command the full sweep of the harbor outside and of the entrance to it round Ram's head on the west and Red Point on the east. From it the garrison could look across the rugged shoulder of East End peninsula and observe any unusual activity on Tortola that might betoken an expedition against the new Danish colony. Any such expedition sailing out from Roadtown harbor, on the British island, would be seen at once and in ample time to permit the Danes to prepare to receive them. So too would any vessels coming south-westward down Sir Francis Drake Channel.

The plantation itself was to lie at the head of the little land enclosed harbor. Here there was a broad, level space, nearly a mile long, and all ringed round with steep hillsides. At the upper end of this space was a low knoll, thrusting up from the level ground round it, and shaped oddly like a woman's breast. This knoll, and the flats which it commanded, were selected as the site of the Company's plantation. The choice of ground for the other plantations was left to the individual settlers.

In settling at this point the Danes were not taking possession of undisputed ground. As early as 1595 Sir Francis Drake, while on his way to attack Puerto Rico, had anchored in the lower bay, and a member of the expedition, whose account of the voyage is given in *Hakluyt's Voyages*, described it as a "very good rode, had it bene for a 1,000 sails of ships, in 14, 12, and 8 fadomes faire sand and good ankorage, high Islands on either side, but no fresh water that we could find:—" Since then it had been used much by pirates and sea rovers who found the hurricane hole, to eastward of the center peninsula an ideal place to careen their vessels and to lie in wait for unsuspecting victims who might be plying the Drake Channel. These, however, were but temporary occupants, and as such met with little objection from the British. As soon as it was evident that the Danes meant to stay, the British governor of the Leeward Islands, General W. Hamilton, sent the Scarborough, with Captain John Marshall, "Capt. Commendant" of Hamilton's regiment, on board, to Saint

Thomas to warn them off. Bredal was worried, but stubborn, and refused to abandon the project.

Despite their threats the British did not come, and the work went steadily forward. After some considerable search a small stream of fresh water was found, and after that the work of colonization went forward much more swiftly, since it was no longer necessary to transport water from Saint Thomas. By 1730, in less than fifteen years, the colony was well established and had begun, in the importance of its agriculture at least, to rival its parent and neighbor to the westward. Besides the plantations grouped around the main settlement at Coral Bay, there were others at what are now Cinnamon Bay, Caneel Bay, Cruz Bay, Reef Bay, Lameshur and Leinster Bay, and there were others which are not mentioned in the old accounts. All of these were connected with one another by trails and probably by rough roads, over which planters and slaves were able to circulate throughout the island.

Now, the greatest problem of the West Indian planter of the day was the slave problem. Africa is an enormous continent, and it is not to be supposed that all her people are alike, even though their skins may be of the same color. Just as in Europe the Italians are different from the Germans, and the Germans are different from the Greeks, and the Greeks in turn are different from the Swedes, so in Africa are the Somali different from the Pygmies, and the Pygmies are different from the Haussas, and the Haussas are different from the Hottentots, and the Hottentots are different from the Kaffirs. It was customary, in the days of the slave trade, for the various companies engaged in the trade to maintain forts upon the African coast. These forts drew their human merchandise from certain areas, so that the slaves supplied by one fort might be one type of Negro, while those supplied by another would be of an entirely different sort. Probably this accounts for much of the great difference which one finds between the Negroes of our southern States and those of the West Indies. Certainly it made a great difference in those days. The Danish West India Company's fort on the Slave Coast, Christiansfort,

supplied for the trade a great many Negroes belong to the Amina tribe.

These Amina were big truculent, independent fellows, difficult to tame, but good workers when driven to it. There were many of them on Saint John and Saint Thomas. Ordinarily these slaves were docile enough. They had to be, for the white men's authority was backed up by the lash and by guns, and after all the prospect of escape from these islands was rather hopeless. So long as they were well fed and sheltered they behaved as well as the planters could expect. Sometimes, however, especially in years of drought or famine, or when hurricanes or blight destroyed crops and houses, they were inclined to be restless and the iron hand was needed to keep them in control. In such times it was the slave quarters which suffered the most. It was the little garden patches which they were required to maintain and which supplied nearly all their food which were wiped out. In times of shortage the food was needed to keep the white planters and their families alive, and in such times slaves were known to starve to death.

The year 1733 was a bad one throughout the islands. In the early spring and summer there was a prolonged drought. In July there came a terrible hurricane which destroyed many buildings and did heavy damage to the crops. An insect plague did further damage, and in the early autumn a second storm all but wiped out the corn crop on which the slaves were dependent for most of their winter food supply. Faced with the prospect of famine the blacks became restless and difficult to control. The following order, issued by Governor Gardelin on September 5, indicates the gravity of the situation:

- (1) The leader of runaway slaves shall be pinched thrice with red-hot irons, and then hung.
- (2) Each other runaway slave shall lose one leg, or if the owner pardon him, shall lose one ear and receive 150 stripes.
- (3) Any slave being aware of the intention of others to

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run away and not giving information shall be burned on the forehead and receive 100 stripes.

- (4) Those who inform of plots to run away shall receive 10 rix-dollars for each slave engaged therein.
- (5) A slave who runs away for eight days shall have 150 stripes; twelve weeks shall lose a leg; and six months shall forfeit life, unless the owner pardon him with the loss of one leg.
- (6) Slaves who steal to the value of 4 rix-dollars shall be pinched and hung; less than 4 rix-dollars shall be branded and receive 150 stripes.
- (7) Slaves who shall receive stolen goods, as such, or protect runaways shall be branded, and receive 150 stripes.
- (8) A slave who lifts his hand to strike a white person or threaten him with violence, shall be pinched and hung, should the white person demand it. If not, to lose his right hand.
- (9) One white person shall be sufficient witness against a slave, and if a slave be suspected of crime he can be tried by torture.
- (10) A slave meeting a white person shall step aside, and wait until he passes; if not he may be flogged.
- (11) No slave shall be permitted to come to town with clubs or knives nor fight with each other under penalty of 50 stripes.
- (12) Witchcraft shall be punished with flogging.
- (13) A slave who shall attempt to poison his master, shall be pinched thrice with a red hot iron, and then broken on a wheel.
- (14) A free negro who shall harbor a slave or a thief shall lose his liberty or be banished.
- (15) All dances, feasts, and plays are forbidden unless permission be obtained from the master or overseer.
- (16) Slaves shall not sell provisions of any kind without permission from their overseers.

- (17) No estate slave shall be in town after drum beat, otherwise he shall be put in the fort and flogged.
- (18) The King's advocate is ordered to see these regulations strictly carried into effect.

These orders were to be proclaimed three times a year to the beat of a drum.

In November following the issuance of this order Governor Gardelin paid a visit to his son-in-law, Judge Soedtmann, who was magistrate for Saint John, and the Company's representative at the Coral Bay plantation. On Saturday morning, November 21, word was sent down from the fort that a large vessel was beating down the Drake Channel towards the island. The Governor believed her to be a ship from Denmark, which he had been expecting, and accordingly, with his daughter and infant grand-daughter, he had himself rowed out to meet her. His guess proved correct, and he went aboard, proceeding with the ship to Saint Thomas. By this slim chance did he save his own life and that of his daughter and grandchild. The plot was laid and the net was spread to catch the Governor and his family, after which the slaves meant to take possession of the island.

The following morning, being Sunday, the usual wood detail composed of ten or a dozen of the company's Negroes, appeared before the fort in the early morning with bundles of wood on their heads. Suspecting nothing, the guard admitted them and slammed the fort gate behind them. No sooner had he done so, however, than the blacks threw down their bundles and snatching out the murderous cane knives which they had carried concealed among the sticks, split the guard's skull and fell upon the small garrison. It was but the work of a moment to rush in upon the corporal in command and the six remaining soldiers of the guard, sleeping in the barrack room, and murder them in their beds. Only one of their number escaped by rolling out on to the floor and slipping under the bed, where the blacks, in the early morning twilight overlooked him.

Later he managed to escape by slipping out of an embrasure and making his way through the brush to the shore below, where he found a canoe in which he fled seaward. It was this soldier who, the following day, carried the news of the revolt to Saint Thomas.

Once their bloody work at the fort was accomplished, the negroes gave the signal for the general rising by firing one of the cannon at the fort three times. On the flats below, the slaves who had been awaiting the signal, seized clubs and knives and rushed upon the great house crowning the knoll at the head of the flat. Within the hour Judge Soedtmann and his stepdaughter, who had remained on the island while her mother went to Saint Thomas, with such other whites as the Negroes could find in the little settlement had been brutally murdered and the great house set ablaze. When this had been accomplished the blacks chopped off the magistrate's head, and setting it upon a pole as a symbol of their intent to rid the island entirely of whites, moved out against the other plantations, well armed now, with muskets and pistols from the fort and the company plantation.

Twenty-five white men, women, and children were butchered that day in the most horrid fashion. The only wonder is that more did not suffer the same fate. Fortunately, however, the work of organization on the outlying plantations had not been so perfect, and many of the planters and their families escaped to the estate of Peter Duerloo, at Kleine Caneelboom (Little Cinnamon Tree) Bay. This is the bay which is today called Caneel; and the ruins which one sees there now are the remains of the very house in which the embattled planters took refuge.

Today, one would no more think of keeping a cannon or two about the house than one would think of lighting up the furnace to keep warm on a hot summer's day. In those days, though, and in those latitudes, it was a handy thing to have a six-pounder or two mounted on one's roof, as well as a good stand of pistols, muskets and cutlasses and a barrel or two of powder and shot kept under lock and key in the storeroom. One never knew when the help might not get out of hand or some seagoing tramp might not take it into his

head that the big house just back from the shore offered easy pickings. Of course, not everyone took these precautions. But now and again one did, and Peter Duerloo was one of these.

The planters, arrived at Caneel Bay, barricaded the doors and windows, loaded cannon, musket, and pistol, sent off a messenger to Saint Thomas with word of the uprising and a plea for help, and then sat down to await the coming of the rebels. They had not long to wait. The slaves stopped only to burn such plantations as lay in their way, after which they fell upon the Duerloo plantation.

The planters put up a stubborn and successful resistance. The Negroes might have been able by sheer weight of numbers to rush the house in the face of musketry alone, but they could not stand in the face of grape and round shot blasted down upon them from the roof by the cannon. In the meantime there was consternation in Saint Thomas. The garrison there was small, only ninety men in all. And the ships in the harbor could supply only sixty more. The local Jager Corps, or militia, might supply as many more.

But the Governor hesitated to divide his forces. There was grave danger that if the Saint Thomas slaves heard of the success of their brothers on the neighboring island, they too might rise, and Gardelin felt that every precaution was needed to prevent this. In the end, however, he was finally persuaded to send a relief party to bring off the survivors of the revolt. This was accomplished, though not without a fight. But when the smoke of battle cleared the blacks were in full possession of the island.

They retained possession of it for six months. Hampered by the lack of adequate force, not to mention a healthy respect for the black's murderous ability, the Danes could accomplish little towards its recovery. Small parties sent out by them managed to recover Duerloo's and the fort at Coral Bay, but the Negroes were scattered through the bush, and it was unsafe for a White to stir beyond those two spots. Gardelin appealed to the English at Tortola for aid. The English responded somewhat gingerly. One expedition of sixty men landed and pushed up into the hills, were ambushed, and fled precipitately with four of their number wounded. A second expe-

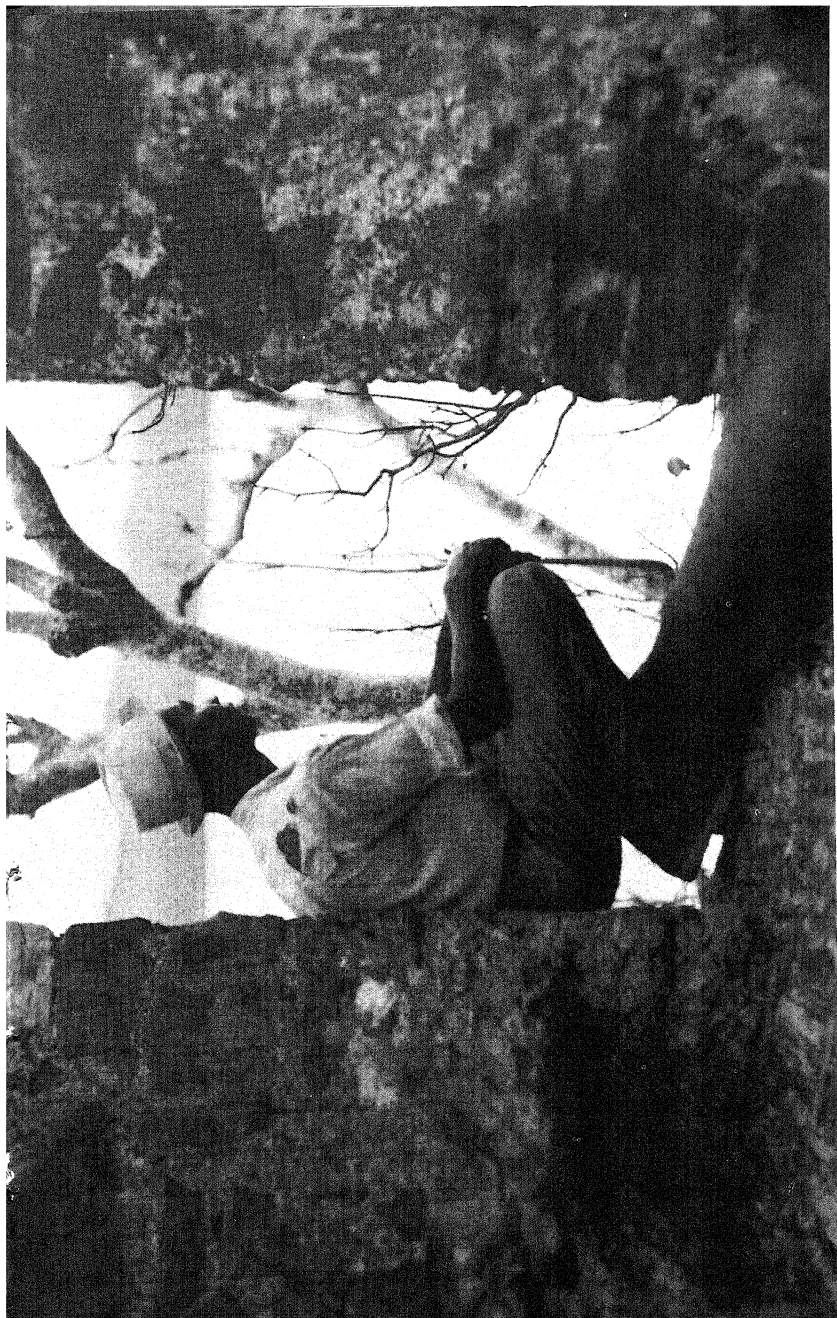
dition was also ambushed, with a loss of three dead and five wounded. From the haste with which the English left the island it is evident that they had little stomach for such bush warfare.

Neither had the Danes. In later years, when West Indian sugar was king of the market, the entire island stood clear and in cane. Today, however, it is overgrown with brush and forest. It is the most heavily wooded of all the islands; and it must present much the same appearance now that it did at the time of the slave rebellion. Looking the tangled jungle of forest trees and undergrowth and thorny creeper and the dense thickets of "cashier"—as the natives call the thorny acacia—one scarcely wonders at the hesitation of the Danes and the English. In that tropic wilderness the blacks knew every path and track that wound through the deep gullies and over the tumbled hills. Theirs was the advantage, and they used it.

At length, in desperation, and with small hope the Danes sent an appeal to the French at Martinique. Just to keep matters on a business footing, the Danes offered 600 rix-dollars, three-fourths of the remaining blacks, if the French could catch them, and supplies for a party of two hundred men if only the French would come to their aid. They really expected that the French would laugh at such a miserable offer, and refuse. Nevertheless, it was the last chance, and must be risked.

What the Danes did not know, the word not yet having reached them from Copenhagen, was that Denmark had just given 750,000 livres and a guarantee of her neutrality in the impending War of the Polish Succession for the French island of Saint Croix. The French at Martinique, however, had been informed of this, and they evidently had their orders from home to conciliate the Danes in the islands in any way possible. Accordingly, to the Danes, amazement they accepted the offer with alacrity—even refusing to accept the money—and dispatched a ship with 400 men to the island.

The French were old hands at this game. They spread out and, working day and night in shifts, they wore down their quarry until they were unable to find a single trace of any of the rebellious Negroes in the bush. As they closed in upon the survivors, the



This old cannon once guarded Saint John against an English attack.
An embrasure in the old battery below Fortberg Hill, Coral Bay.



On Easter Monday "de big maskerade parade de street" in

Negroes, rather than fall into their hands blew out their own brains with the muskets they had taken from the rifled plantations. In one spot the French came upon eleven of them "dead by their own hand." Tradition says that in the end three hundred of the unhappy blacks joined hands and threw themselves from the high cliffs of Mary's Point into the sea below, rather than allow themselves to be taken by the French. Actually the number was twenty-four. Within a month the French had accomplished what they had set out to do, and returned home with the thanks of the Danes still ringing in their ears.

When the planters returned, it was discovered that a party of fourteen Negroes and Negresses were still in hiding in the bush under the leadership of one, Prince. These were lured in by Theodore Ottingen with a promise of pardon if they would surrender. When they came in they were promptly seized and clapped into irons. Prince was beheaded and Ottingen carried his head to Saint Thomas to the governor as a token that the rebellion was at last at an end. For this brilliant piece of skullduggery Ottingen was rewarded with a commission as a lieutenant in Saint Croix and much high praise from his superiors.

The fate of the thirteen survivors of Prince's band is an index of what befell the captured rebels. Of these, four died before they could be brought to trial—how, the account does not say. Four were sentenced to be worked to death on the new fortifications which were to be built on Saint Croix. The rest were done to death by various means "such as they deserved because of their gruesome deeds," as the report reads.

Before the slave rebellion of 1733 there were ninety-two estates on Saint John. In the century following there were many more. At the height of its prosperity the island's high hills were clad, from shore to summit, in waving, light green cane, higher than a man's head. Coconut and fruits groves surrounded the great plantation houses at the heads of the little bays. Fine roads spread a network throughout the island. When Mrs. Beverhoudt at the East End

wished to visit Mrs. Kruger near Cruz Bay, she made the journey in a fine carriage, drawn by spirited nags and driven by an ebony coachman. The young bloods of the island used to race their traps along the Centerline Road.

Today, if one would see the island thoroughly, one rides one of the small island horses or perhaps a shaggy burro or walks. There is no other way to get around, unless it is by boat. Save for a couple of two-wheeled carts and an old model T Ford truck,—used by the WPA to build the schoolhouse at Coral Bay, and there abandoned—there is not a wheeled vehicle on the island. In fact there are no roads. Even the Centerline, once a fine broad highway, is today no more than a trail through the bush. In riding over these trails one can still see abundant evidence of what they once were. But the bush grows quickly in this climate, and when the bottom dropped out of the sugar market, Saint John began to return to its original state. Today it is very nearly as the Danes found it two hundred years ago.

The Centerline, still Saint John's main road, leads out of Cruz Bay, due east from the landing, and climbs steeply into the hills, passing the little red-roofed mission church of Bethany and swinging around the edge of Margaret hill, gains the centerline ridge near Susanaberg.

Susanaberg is an excellent example of what Saint John must once have been, as well as what it is today. Here stand the ruins of what must at one time have been a fine old house. Today the upper stories are gone, torn away by the hurricane, but the thick, old stone walls below still stand, an empty shell, tracing the pattern of the elaborate floor plan of the house and the layout of the various other buildings on the hilltop. The house itself evidently enclosed two sides of an open courtyard in which was an elaborate flower garden. A broken flight of steps still leads between ornamented gateposts into this courtyard. Goats and pigs, more wild than tame, wander among the broken walls and run crashing through the brush at the stranger's approach. As you look at the buildings, they seem centuries old. Actually this was a prosperous estate as recently as the latter part of

the nineteenth century, and the greater part of the ruin which we see before us was only done by storms in the last two decades. Some of the walls are undoubtedly very old. Others are quite recent, as a date above one of the doors testifies. There was a good house standing here as recently as 1928. But the hurricane of that year destroyed it. Yet so swiftly does the bush swallow up whatever man has abandoned that these ruins, to all outward appearances, might have been lying here for well over two centuries. Nor is this confined to Susanaberg. One encounters the same conditions throughout the island.

Beyond Susanaberg the road winds along the ridge passing the overgrown ruins of several estates along the way. Sometimes the way is fairly open, the roadside being lined with low growing "cashier" and tangled "catch-and-keep," a stubborn creeper whose name describes it more eloquently than a thousand words. At other points the road—or rather the path—passes through groves of great trees; mangoes, mahogany, silk-cotton, tibet, and tamarind, and what seems to be a species of magnolia. Everywhere strange tropic fruits grow in abundance: soursops, sugar apples, mespals—in Florida they call them sapodillas—guavas, mangoes, calabashes, and bananas. Here and there, near some old ruin, one comes upon a tree of limes grown wild.

Almost midway of the island a track leads off to the right to Reef Bay around the humped shoulder of Camelberg Peak. At Reef Bay a small stream, dry in most seasons of the year, joins the sea. High up in the bed of this stream, where it drops over the rocky headwall of a ravine, are to be found certain faces and hieroglyphic figures—a cross among them—which are ascribed to the ancient Caribs who once inhabited the island. Like most undecipherable inscriptions they are rather dull. Not at all dull, however, is the climb to the top of the falls, so called, where one finds great masses of delicate wild orchids and a magnificent panorama of the mountain amphitheatre spread out below with the blue of the sea beyond.

Also at Reef Bay is a well-preserved old house, set high on the hillside, and the ruin of an elaborate old sugar mill. Both of these are the property of a fine old Negress named Miss Marsh, who lives

in a rickety shack near the mill. Miss Marsh is inclined to be a little mite suspicious of visitors, and seems rather cranky at first. However, if she takes a liking to you she will thaw noticeably after the first few words of conversation and will probably end by offering you coconut juice direct from fresh green coconuts whose ends have been chopped off with a machete. Miss Marsh is one of the few natives of Saint John who has been to New York. When asked how she liked it, she proved herself a discerning woman by replying: "Oh, bless God, not for me. I see men an' women wu'kin, wu'kin, all day an' mos' de night ontel dey come home so tarred out dey ain' got time to have a little fun. Dey jes' draps theyselves down ontel dey bed an' sleep ontel hit time to git up an run to wu'k agin. No, oh, bless God, not for me! To me that seem la'k a kin' o' a slavery."

From Reef Bay one may go on around the shore to Coral Bay past the old estates of Lameshur, Mandal, John's Folly, Calabash Boom and Sanders Bay. A better route, however, takes one by a forest trail back to the Centerline, and thence, bearing right, through the bay groves crowning the summit of Bordeaux Mountain. On the way up the road is much the same as those over which we have already passed, save that here the bay trees, which hitherto have grown somewhat sparingly, become abundant. One may snatch leaves from them as one rides along. Crushed in the hand they have a pleasant, clinging, mildly aromatic odor.

At the very top of Bordeaux Mountain is a tiny settlement of bay-pickers, besides the charcoal-burners: the only people on the island who could be looked upon as laborers in a formal industry. Their little settlement has one of the choice locations on the island, for from their front doors a vast panorama of sea and shore and mountain is spread. Directly below the church at Emmaus and the houses of the settlement at Coral Bay stand amid their fields like toys. Coral Bay itself is unrolled beyond like an enormous relief map. One sees the encircling arm of the East End, the scalloped bowl of the Hurricane Hole, the stubby peninsula of Fortberg Hill, and tiny, almost landlocked Coral Harbor with perhaps a toy sloop or two riding upon its blue bosom. Over beyond the East End lies the Drake

Channel flanked on the one hand by high Tortola and on the other by a string of islands: Norman, Peter, Salt, Cooper, Ginger, and beyond the Virgin Gorda—the Fat Virgin. Beyond that one can see the low lying bulk of Anegada and the hat shape of Sombrero. All the rest is sea—deep blue, and sparkling. This is the most spectacular view we shall find in the islands.

From the mountain top the trail dips down to Coral Bay below, so sharply that the most expert rider will prefer to dismount and lead his nag. The trail is visible for a long distance from below, so that it is quite likely one will be met on arrival below by “Mister Willie” Marsh, whose sister Gerda, keeps a small guest cottage for the accommodation of strangers. One might do worse than to stop here for a day or two, in order thoroughly to see the district. Though the little guest house lacks some of the comforts of home, at least it makes no pretense at being other than it is. The Marshes do everything they can think of to please, and their rates are ridiculously low. If you stay long enough “Mister Willie” will take you shooting wood doves in the mountains or sailing in his sloop, and the Reverend Penn, the pastor of the picturesque yellow-walled, red-roofed mission at Emmaus across the valley, will come to call.

These people are all Negroes. There is not a white person among them. Yet strangely enough here one scarcely realizes it. In Saint Thomas one is always conscious of the color question. In Saint John, however, the people become just people—kindly people, friendly people, honest people, real people, simple and sincere, people you couldn't help liking if you wanted to.

A day or two at Coral Bay will not be wasted. At the upper end of the valley, perched atop the little round knoll, “shaped like a woman's breast,” are the ruins of the once great house of Carolina Plantation. This is not the original house that stood here when the slaves rebelled and rushed it. Some of the original foundations may still be there but the rest is of a much later date. “Mister Willie,” who is a young man, can remember when his family lived there—his father was an Englishman, his mother a mulatto. The family moved out of the great house after the hurricane of 1924 had removed the

roof and upper story. Successive hurricanes since have removed other portions, until what little remains of it has a look of genuine antiquity. "Mister Willie" tells of several old chests and trunks that were kept in the attic of the old house. He says they were filled with old letters, account books, documents, many of them yellow with age. They would have made interesting reading, and might have shed much light on the history of the island. But, alas, they too were removed by the hurricane.

Around the steep sides of the knoll are the obviously ancient ruins of what must once have been the slave quarters: a criss-cross arrangement of tiny rooms. Farther down are the remains of two big sugar mills and a sturdy, thick-walled windmill tower. In going into the tower be careful, for there are rotten beams inside, and near the top is a big hive and an enormous cone of wild honey. The bees are quick to resent any intrusion on their privacy.

Across the little bay from the Marsh guest house rises wooded Fortberg Hill. At its top still stand the thick walls of the tiny fort which the Danes built here to protect their new settlement and where the wood-carrying detail so ruthlessly murdered the garrison. It is a steep, hard climb through thorny acacia and exasperating catch-and-keep, but a boy with a cane knife can make it easier, and it well repays the effort to see how strategically the fort was located above the little bay, and to look out from its walls to the towering slopes of Tortola beyond the East End peninsula. Down on the outside of the little point, near the water's edge, is an old battery, thrown up at a later date when it was thought the British were about to attack the island. Here a half a dozen rusty old cannon, their carriages long since rotted away, lie upon their sides, still staring grimly out to sea through their embrasures.

Another expedition that may be undertaken from Coral Bay is either by the somewhat overgrown path or across the bay by boat to East End. Here one finds the best beaches on this part of the island. Unfortunately the beaches here do not compare at all with those of the north and west coasts of the island. Also, because this side of the island is sheltered from the prevailing winds, one is apt to find the

sand flies troublesome. It is advisable if one plans to stay any time at all to take along a small bottle of citronella—or better still, a mixture of equal parts of citronella, oil of pennyroyal, and oil of pine tar. Lacking this, however, a bottle of bay rum, purchased at the little store in Coral Bay for twenty cents, and a few drops of bay oil, wheedled from “Mister Willie,” will make an effective but somewhat overpowering repellent. Because it must be applied frequently, being highly volatile, this is apt to impair one’s taste for bay rum for some time to come, but it does the trick.

Returning from Coral Bay one has a choice of routes. One may go directly back along the Centerline Road. One may start along the Centerline and turn off at the first right hand turning to descend to the north shore at Maho Bay, calm and still in the high shelter of Mary’s Point. Or one may climb the hill behind Emmaus Mission to come out on the narrows at Leinster Point, with Tortola rising across the way almost within spitting distance. From here the road follows the north shore, ducking behind Mary’s Point to join the other route at Maho Bay.

From Maho Bay onward we are in the region of bays and beaches. Here, to my mind at least, are some of the finest beaches in the world. None of them is on the grand scale. Not one exceeds a quarter of a mile in length, and most of them are no more than a few rods long. All of them are wide enough to stretch out upon. The sand is white and fine and soft, and they slope gently to water that is cool, delicious to the touch, and so crystal clear that one must see it and swim in it to believe it. All of the beaches are fringed with palms and sea-grape, with spreading mangoes and almonds and silk-cotton trees behind. Cinnamon Bay is best of all. Trunk Bay is next and is also fine. Little Jumby Bay is pleasant but confined. At Denis Bay the beach is fine for sitting, but not so good for swimming because of the coral rocks that here come in close to shore. Here is what is known as “The Fishing Club,” a substantial building with four or five comfortable rooms. For a time in 1938 this was used as a sort of Saint John’s annex to the Grand Hotel in Saint Thomas, and a very comfortable place to stay it was, though it had its inconveniences. At last reports,

however, it had been abandoned. Whether or not it will reopen remains to be seen.

Beyond Denis Bay, Hognest Bay has one very fine beach a little distance off the trail, and there are several more beaches whose privacy is complete in the scattered coves around the point which here juts out between Hognest and Caneel Bays.

At Caneel Bay the *Flamingo* sputters at the dock, waiting to carry us back once more to "civilization," though many will find Saint John far more civilized than Saint Thomas. Catch the last trip in the evening if there is one, for then the soft light of the setting sun paints glorious pictures in shifting light and shadow upon Saint John's high wooded slopes, and the blue smoke of the charcoal fires rises through the trees in wispy clouds. It is a sight one will not soon forget.

SAINT CROIX

Chapter XIV

SAINTE JOHN was, and is, a wooded island. Foresters seem agreed that Saint Thomas never was heavily wooded. The mahogany and other trees which flourish there now are importations from other islands. Saint Croix, on the other hand, was once wooded. Now it is bare. In *Hakluyt's Voyages* is an account of the fourth expedition sent by Sir Walter Raleigh to Virginia. This expedition stopped for a time on Saint Croix, and the account runs, in part, as follows:

In the yeere of Our Lord 1587. Sir Walter Raleigh intending to persevere in the planting of his countrey of Virginia, prepared a newe Colonie of one hundred and fiftie men to be sent thither, under the charge of John White, whom hee appointed Governour, and also appointed unto him twelve Assistants, unto whom hee gave a Charter, and incorporated them by the name of Governour and Assistants of the Citie of Raleigh in Virginia.

Our fleete being in number three saile—the 8 (May) we weyed anker at Plimmouth, and departed thence for Virginia.

The 22 (June) we came to anker at an Island called Santa Cruz, where all the planters were set on land, staying there till the 25 of the same moneth. At our first landing on this Island, some of our women, and men, by eating of a small fruit like greene apples, were fearefully troubled with a sudden burning in their mouthes, and swelling of their tongues so bigge, that some of them could not speake. Also a child by sucking one of those women's breasts, had at that instant his mouthe set on such

a burning, that it was strange to see how the infant was tormented for the time: but after 24 houres it ware away of it selfe.

Also the first night of our being on this Island, we took five great torteses, some of them of such a bigness that sixteene of our strongest men were tired with carying of one of them but from the sea side to our cabbins. In this Island we found no watring place, but a standing pond, the water whereof was so evill, that many of our company felle sicke with drinking thereof: and as many as did but wash their faces with that water, in the morning before the sunne had drawn away the corruption, their faces did so burn and swell, that their eyes were shut up, and could not see in five or sixe dayes, or longer.

The second day of our abode there, we sent forth some of our men to search the Island for fresh water, three one way, and two another way. The Governour also, with sixe others, went up to the top of an high hill, to viewe the Island, but could perceive no signe of any men, or beastes, nor any goodnes, but parrots and trees of Guiacum. Returning back to our cabbins another way, he found in discent of a hill, certaine potsheards of savage making, made of the earth of that Island: whereupon it was judged, that this Island was inhabited with Savages, though Fernando had told us for certaine to the contrary. The same day at night, the rest of our company very late returned to the Governour. The one company affirmed, that they had seen in a valley eleven Savages, and divers houses halfe a mile distant from the steepe, or toppe of the hill where they stayed. The other company had found running out of a high rocke a very fayre spring of water, whereof they brought three bottels to the company: for before that time, wee drank the stinking water of the pond.

—The next day, at night, our planters left Santa Cruz, and came all aboard, and the next morning after, being the 25 of June we weyed anker, and departed from Santa Cruz.

And who could blame them? The trees of "Guiacum" (?) are

gone today, for when the French came to settle the island in 1651 they set fire to the entire island and lay offshore in their ships until the fire had burnt itself out. It was a simple method, and an effective one, for the heavy woods never came back. There is some jungle-like growth in the steep hollows of the northern hills, but one must go to this to see it. The manchineel, however, which provided the "small fruit like green apples" came back, and grows abundantly in some spots today. The natives maintain that if one so much as stands beneath it during a shower, the raindrops falling from it will raise blisters on the skin. Fortunately, it is not plentiful enough to be a great pest.

One approaches Saint Croix from the north. If the day is clear one will see it within a half an hour after one has left the harbor of Charlotte Amalie, lying long, and low and shapeless on the southern horizon. As we draw nearer, however, it begins to take on more definite form. The highest point is at the western end. Another high point is touched near the eastern end. In between runs a ridge of low hills. On this side the steep, bare slopes rise abruptly from the water's edge.

One may sometimes find passage across on the ships of the Furness Line or the American Caribbean Line freighters, in which case one lands at Fredericksted. Twice weekly, however, the comfortable little S.S. *Catherine* of the Bull Insular line runs across to Christiansted, and this is the usual way of crossing.

Over the top of little Protestant Cay, we see Christiansted long before we get to it: a huddle of red roofs, sprawling along the shore from the inevitable little pink fort and struggling a short way up the hill behind. As we draw in closer, the ship performs a marvelous series of gyrations, twisting and turning upon its course like a ballet dancer. This is necessary to avoid the reefs which guard the harbor entrance, and accounts for the fact that all the larger ships call at Fredericksted in preference. Indeed, a larger ship than the *Catherine* could hardly squeeze inside the harbor. Christiansted's anchorage is better than Fredericksted's, being more protected. But because of

the reefs most vessels call at Fredericksted, where the road is open and the water deep.

Saint Croix was settled first by the English and the Dutch. For a time the two colonies lived in harmony. But after a while they quarreled, and the English drove the Dutch away. In 1650 came retribution in the form of the Spaniards, who chased off the English. They in turn were driven away by the French, who, under the auspices of the Knights of Malta, settled it in 1651. The colony, though it stuck, was not too successful, and the Knights moved on to other fields. In 1733 the French sold it to the Danes, who held it for nearly two hundred years.

During that time little of importance occurred. The English held the island for a time at the beginning of the nineteenth century, but restored it to the Danes in 1814. In 1848 the slaves who labored in the cane fields rose in rebellion, and the planters took refuge in the two forts at Christiansted and Fredericksted. Much to the planters' disgust the frightened governor offered no resistance, but immediately proclaimed the slaves free, thus bringing the rebellion to a quick halt and forestalling what might have proved a very bloody affair. In 1878, as has been told, the blacks again rebelled. This time affairs did not work out so smoothly. Many planters were trapped on their plantations and murdered out of hand. A large number of plantations as well as most of Fredericksted was burned—from which fact the rising is remembered today as "the burning." There are those alive in the island today who remember the bloody affair. Just north of the little fort in Fredericksted are the graves of two gendarmes who were butchered while trying to hold the little bridge north of town against the advancing mob. Those of the whites who could took refuge in the fort, and stood off the mob with cannon for some time before help arrived from Saint Thomas. When help did arrive, however, the whites took a terrible revenge. It is said that companies of gendarmes, marching along the Centerline Road, shot on sight every black they met without stopping to question whether or not he had taken part in the uprising. Men women and children were thus slaughtered and their bodies left where they lay to rot as a warning

of what the blacks might expect in the event of further risings. Since that day, with the exception of hurricanes and such natural upheavals, and an occasional labor dispute, the course of the island's history has been moderately serene.

The best view of Christiansted is obtained from the deck of the *Catherine* as she swings at anchor in the harbor. From that point one is able to obtain a comprehensive view of the whole. On the left the pink, bastioned fort overhangs the water, with the houses of the east end of town rising on the hill behind it. Immediately beside the fort is a shady park, over the tops of whose trees a pretty red-tipped steeple rises. Next to the park is a large open plaza which stretches back from the landing stage towards the town proper. In the center of the plaza are a boxlike white building, housing the Public Library, and a smaller, older red building surrounded by a low wall, made of the same materials as those of which the fort is constructed. This structure has an ancient air, and was probably the original fort. Today it houses the cable office. Beyond the cable office stands the first row of buildings of the town itself, gray-white and yellow structures, squat-fronted, with wide, Dutch-looking roofs and low arcades running along their front. Behind them the town stretches away a mere jumble of red roofs. On the extreme right a large warehouse fronts upon the harbor, and beyond that the shore sweeps in a wide curve around to the hills and the beginnings of the reef.

Christiansted's population is only some 3,700. But it gives the impression of being larger. It is the seat of government and administration, and for that reason has the more important shops. It is the business and shopping center of the island.

From the landing one of the two main streets runs up to the right, through the heart of the town. It is dusty and lined on either hand by rather grim-fronted, arcaded buildings, and though it has its moments of noisy activity, they subside quickly. In general it has a rather funereal Sunday air. The big pink bulk of Government House is on this street, just a few rods back from the landing plaza, an imposing structure which shares the general air of somnolence. The big, red, high school, with windows opened wide on to the

street, is also here, and a little further along, on the right, is the gray, weatherbeaten, rather dilapidated-looking front of Pentheny's Hotel.

Diagonally across from Government House is a junky, old-fashioned store whose shelves contain a varied assortment of musty, dusty merchandise. Although recently sold at auction, it may still be identified by the sign "W. Clindinen" over the arcade that fronts it.

Exactly how long this store has been there is not certain. It was there in 1772, however, for in that year a terrible hurricane struck the island. When the storm had blown itself out, and people had time to look about and estimate the damage, a young clerk in this store, a mere lad of fifteen years, sat down and wrote a letter to his father in St. Kitts. He wrote from Saint Croix dating it September 6, 1772.

HONORED SIR:

I take up my pen, just to give you an imperfect account of one of the most dreadful hurricanes that memory or any records whatever can trace, which happened here on the 31st ultimo at night.

It began about dusk, at the north, and raged very violently till ten o'clock. Then ensued a sudden and unexpected interval, which lasted about an hour. Meanwhile the wind was shifting around to the southwest point, from whence it returned with redoubled fury and continued until nearly three in the morning. Good God! what horror and destruction—it is impossible for me to describe—or you to form any idea of it. It seemed as if a total dissolution of nature was taking place. The roaring of the sea and wind—fiery meteors flying about in the air—the prodigious glare of almost perpetual lightning—the crash of falling houses—and the ear piercing shrieks of the distressed were sufficient to strike astonishment into angels. A great part of the buildings throughout the island are levelled to the ground—almost all the rest very much shattered—several persons killed and numbers utterly ruined—whole families roaming about the streets, unknowing where to find a place of shelter—the sick exposed to

the keenness of water and air—without a bed to lie upon—or a dry covering to their bodies—and our harbors entirely bare. In a word, misery, in its most hideous shapes, spread over the face of the country. —A strong smell of gunpowder added somewhat to the terrors of the night; and it was observed that the rain was exceedingly salt. Indeed the water is so brackish and full of sulphur that there is hardly any drinking it. —Our General has issued several very salutary and humane regulations, and both in his public and private measures has shown himself the man.

There was more, but it need not all be quoted. When it was done he signed it “Yr. affectionate son, A. Hamilton,” sanded, folded and sealed it and sent it on its way.

Alexander Hamilton was the illegitimate son of Rachel Levine and James Hamilton. Rachel, a native of Nevis, had married Levine a Dane when quite young. She had never been happy with him, and would have divorced him if she could, but that was difficult, if not impossible for a woman in those days. It was difficult, too, for a woman to set public opinion to one side and follow the promptings of her heart, but being denied the respectability of divorce there seemed to be no other course. She eloped with Hamilton to St. Kitts.

Alexander, their first child, was born in Nevis in 1757. They lived for a time there and on St. Kitts, but presently, coming upon hard times, they removed to Saint Croix, where James Hamilton was an estate manager. Rachel died when Alexander was but ten, and Alexander’s father, unsuccessful as an estate manager, sought other employment on St. Vincent, whence he later returned to St. Kitts. Young Alexander and his brother were left in the care of an aunt in Saint Croix. When he was twelve Alexander went to work for Nicolas Cruger, who owned a store in Christiansted and another in Fredericksted.

For three years he worked for Cruger, proving himself a good worker. But he hated the island. It was a small world and a small society, and it bored him. He felt himself destined for greater things, and he longed to get away. Finally, in 1772, came the hurricane and

the letter. The letter found its way into the St. Kitts paper, and thence got back to Saint Croix. There his friends and relatives were so much impressed that they felt such talents should be encouraged. Among them they made up a purse, and young Alexander had his wish. He left by the very next ship for New York, where he enrolled as a student at King's College—now Columbia University. He never returned to Saint Croix. One wonders what might have been the course of American history had that hurricane not visited a small island in the Caribbean at just the time it did.

Although Christiansted is the larger of the island's two towns, and is the center of business and administrative activities, it is not the most cheerful spot on the island. Quaint though it is, and attractive when viewed from the sea, there is a distinctly depressing air about it that is impossible to define.

Little Fredericksted, at the West end of the island, is a very different sort of place. Six blocks long and five blocks deep, Fredericksted sprawls along the bay front from the inevitable little red fort and park. One paved, arcaded street fronts upon the water. There is a paved plaza at the landing stage, between the fort on the one hand and the bank on the other, with the customs house standing at the back. All other streets are unpaved, wide, dusty. Every passing breath of wind, every vehicle, every ambling nag, raises a cloud of dust. Chickens scratch in the gravel of the roadways, and long-headed, chunky-bodied Crucian dogs fight savagely at intersections. At night dogs bark and cocks crow endlessly. Just why the cocks should crow from midnight on is something of a mystery, but a fact nevertheless. They have one brazen-lunged patriarch who harangues them, I suspect, from the walls of the little fort. The assembled multitude waits patiently until his long drawn crow is finished. Then they raise their voices in not-quite-unified clamor. Follows an instant's silence, in which muttered curses can be heard issuing from second story jealousies. Then the Patriarch repeats his call, and the mob babbles after. When the cocks are done the dogs begin. And when

the dogs are tired out the cocks are ready to carry on again. So it goes till morning.

In description it sounds bucolic; and in a sense it is. But it is alive and cheerful. With the exception of a church or two it is architecturally unattractive; but the people who live there don't seem to mind. Christiansted may be more to look at, but beside Fredericksted it is like a tomb.

Fredericksted's animation is accounted for, at least in so far as strangers are concerned, in no small measure by the Beach Club, whose bath houses and rambling open clubhouse stand upon the shore a short distance north of town. Saint Croix has no such beaches as Saint John or even Saint Thomas. They are inclined to be rocky—and thus the haunt of spiny sea eggs—or else subject to treacherous currents. Residents of Christiansted usually go three or four miles across the island to Watch Hole, where there is some small surf and a rather sharp drop, which combines with the nearby point to create a tricky undertow which has caused the death of more than one swimmer. South of Fredericksted is the long spit of Sandy Point which offers perhaps the best bathing on the island—if one is careful. One must beware of manchineel, which grows rather abundantly there. Also, this beach drops off sharply, creating unpleasant currents. Because of the eddies created by the tip of the island, these waters are the haunts of many small fish. These lure numbers of ungainly pelicans, to which no one could object. But they also draw numbers of larger and more predatory fish. Large sharks and barracuda have been seen offshore here, and though no one has ever been bothered by them, still one is never quite comfortable while bathing there. On the whole Fredericksted's Club offers the best swimming. There is a small beach there, and one can wade out far enough to get wet without encountering rocks. After that one may swim in any direction without fear of sea monsters or ocean currents. Moreover, the Club is easily reached on foot from town. Strangers, so long as they do not prove themselves undesirable, are welcome, and the Club Secretary will issue courtesy cards to visitors planning a short stay on the island who will apply. This makes Fredericksted the choice place

on the island to stay for any length of time. Coulter's, the only hotel, is clean and reasonably comfortable, and the food is abundant and hearty. The rates both there and in Christiansted are the same and are extremely reasonable.

Glancing at the map of Saint Croix issued by the Coast and Geodetic Survey, one is amazed at the network of roads which crisscrosses the island. Unlike Saint Thomas, with only a few paltry miles of good road, or Saint John, with no roads at all, Saint Croix has good roads everywhere. In view of this it comes as something of a surprise to find car hire so high. Fortunately, there is a bus line which runs on an irregular schedule between Christiansted and Fredericksted, a distance of some fifteen miles along the Centerline Road. If one feels it necessary to see every thing on the island practically any part can be reached on foot from the Centerline.

It is not necessary, however, to look at everything. Saint Croix has few outstanding sights, beyond her general landscape, and with the single exception of the northwest corner of the island when one has ridden the length of the Centerline Road one has seen all there is to see. Other side trips are merely a repetition of what has already been seen.

In general Saint Croix is similar in aspect to the southern part of Puerto Rico. Arid, rolling, almost flat, nowhere is it heavily wooded. Here and there stand clumps of palms. The almost dry courses of the one or two streams which the island boasts are lined with thick, verdant, jungle growth. Along the road grow rows of tibet trees, whose light pods rustling in the breeze give them the name of "women's tongues." But elsewhere trees stand singly upon the landscape. Sugar is everywhere, especially in the center of the island. What is not planted to cane is pasture, for Saint Croix raises a large number of draft oxen which are sent to Puerto Rico. The low thorny "cashier" is abundant.

Beyond any question the most conspicuous sight on the island, seen on every hand and at every turning, are the squat, semi-conical

shaped windmill towers, most frequently set among or near the buildings of an estate.

Some of these estates are still occupied. A few, well managed, produce a comfortable, if not fabulous, living for their owners. Others are barely maintained with the greatest difficulty. Most of them are mere ruins. Many of them were burned in '78. Others have been abandoned and left to be picked to pieces by the hurricane. But ruin or no, they speak eloquently of a bygone day, and afford some idea of how prosperous this island must once have been. Invariably they are small villages in themselves. Here is the great house. There are the long rows of Negro cabins. There is a mill, sometimes two, a granary, storehouses, a barn, cattle sheds and pens. In former days an estate had to be self-contained, for distances were longer when there were no automobiles.

The names of these old estates are eloquent, too. They afford an index to the character of the original owners. Some thought of riches. Some were romantic. Some were gamblers. Some were religious. Some were optimists. Some were pessimists. Some were just plain discouraged. Solitude, Mary's Fancy, All-For-The-Better, Mount Welcome, Recovery, Contentment, Little Princes, Judith Fancy, Peter's Rest, Humbug, Pearl, Peter's Rest, Diamond Keturah, Jerusalem, Hope, Profit, Envy, Blessing, Barren Spot, Slob, Paradise, Adventure, Upper and Lower Love, Jealousy, Whim, Jolly Hill, Wheel-of-Fortune, Good Hope, Mount Victory, are but a few. Each tells a little story in itself.

There are other sights on the island. Near Christiansted is an up-to-date leper asylum. One of the grimly amusing tales told in the island has to do with this institution. It is alleged that the only case of major crime on Saint Croix in recent years is that of a young Negro who broke into the asylum and raped one of the inmates!

There are three sugar "centrals" on the island, similar to those one sees in Puerto Rico but on a much smaller scale. Two of these, one at Christiansted and one at Bethlehem in the center of the island belong to the Virgin Islands Company. The third, Grange, at Fredricksted, is independently owned.

A little over halfway between Bethlehem and Fredericksted is the former estate, Whim, now a part of the Federal Homestead project. This project was begun in 1932 with the purchase of some 2,127 acres in the island by the Government. This land was divided into small plots of some six acres each which have been offered to the natives, all Negroes in this case, at an average annual cost of \$16, the payments to continue over a period of twenty years. How well the plan has worked is indicated by the fact that some four hundred of these small farms have been sold, with payments to date about ninety-eight per cent paid up. After the homesteaders have passed a probationary period of land cultivation, the Government, if they wish it, will build a two-room concrete house complete with kitchen and cistern at a cost of \$700. These also may be paid for on the twenty-year plan, the payments averaging around \$4.00 per month. Several of these houses may be seen at Whim. They are a decided improvement over the tumbledown shacks in which these people formerly lived.

In addition to the homesteading project are two WPA housing units, one each, at Fredericksted and Christiansted. These, too, are decided improvements over the general living conditions. The natives who live in them, however, do not appear to be entirely satisfied.

"We ketch cold on dem cee-ment flo's," one of them said.

"De guv'ment cha'ge we too much money," said another. "De one rooms cos' we seventy-five cent de week. De two rooms cos' we one dolluh."

It is worth noting, however, that both projects are filled.

Two other trips besides the one over the Centerline should be taken. The first of these follows the shore, some five miles, north of Fredericksted to Ham's Bluff on the northwest corner of the island. On this trip one sees magnificently wild shore scenery somewhat similar to that of Saint Thomas. The other trip makes a loop up through the mountains north and east of Fredericksted, passing through Annaly and Mount Victory and coming down past Creque Dam, a catchment in the hills intended as a water supply for Fredericksted. On this trip one encounters country similar to that of the interior of Puerto Rico, rather than to that of the other islands of the

group. A third trip of some interest is that to the mouth of the Salt River, at Sugar Bay, where Columbus is said to have anchored at the time of his discovery of the island.

Such are the Virgin Islands of the United States as they are today. What they will become in time remains to be seen. Saint Croix with its agricultural background is quiet. Its people are possessed of a kindliness of disposition and a sense of hospitality beyond the power of words to convey. If one is looking for a spot to which to retire to lead a peaceful and leisurely existence on a small income amid congenial neighbors one could not do better than choose Saint Croix. Saint Thomas is for gayety—even for a dash of boisterousness. The Marines lend it life. For solitude one should pick Saint John. Peace and comfort, gayety, solitude, a perfect climate, and unsurpassed beauty: what more could one ask of any place?

THE END

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